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Aids to the Inner D

The Hidden Life of the S

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hurch. The process of adaptation,
se of this volume, is not left to the
t has been undertaken with the view
g every expression, as far as possible,
ony with the Book of Common Prayer
an Divinity

FROM THE FRENCH OF
JEAN NICOLAS GR

EDITED BY THE REV.
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RIVINGTONS
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MDCCCLXXXI



Preface

THE author from whose writings these chapters on the Interior Life are taken (not literally, but substantially), was deeply and practically versed in the subject which he wrote. While leading man along its blessed ways, his own life, as the world is concerned, was altogether with Christ in God." Profoundly learned only as a theologian, but also as a student, the earnest devoutness of his heart (which was at once deep and broad) taught him to humble the power of a large and cultivated intellect before the Faith of Christ and the simplicity of a little child. Jean Nicolas's writings are characterised by an abstinence and exaggeration which gives peculiar weight to his teaching. Love of God is the main principle which he would rule the whole Christian

in the restless period which preceded the great Revolution.


It would be incorrect to say of a man who lived in such times that his years were uneventful; and yet Jean Nicolas Grou's life leaves with an impression of calmness and tranquillity in spite of its manifold troubles, ending as it did with exile and a lingering death in a foreign land. But throughout that life the question "What profit?" and "What matter?" was answered practically by "I count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."

There is not much to tell of the early incidents of Père Grou's life. He was born at Calais in 1731, and educated by the Jesuit Fathers. Study and devotion (under the head we must include the guidance) *filled up his life*, whether in Paris, or in *raine*—where the Duke Stanislas

Preface

him during a period of trial which preceded the outbreak of the great Revolution—or in Holland, or in England, whither, in the year 1792, he finally retired before the rapidly advancing waves of that terrible tempest. Père Grou was the author of various works, classical as well as theological. One of the latter, "*Traité dogmatique de la vraie religion*" undertaken at the request of Monseigneur Beaumont, Archbishop of Paris, and costing fourteen years of labour, was burnt at Paris some time later. On receiving the tidings, Père Grou's only remark was, "If the world could serve God, He would have preserved it; but He will make use of some other more profitable servant than I am, to promote His Glory."

In the year 1792, the Rev. Mr. Clinton, chaplain to Mr. Weld of Lulworth, invited Père Grou to seek a refuge in England; and for a time the exile shared Father Clinton's quarters, whence after a while he moved to Lulworth Castle, at Mr. Weld's earnest desire. A devoted friendship between the Weld family and Père Grou seems to have lasted during



every effort. Only, is the result of every effort. And we may well believe that as the venerable priest passed to his rest, those touching words upon his lips, "My heart is indeed sweet to die in Thine Arms," heart re-echoed the summary he has left of all his teaching, "No more self, no more is world,

"GOD ONLY."

BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE STRENGTH
THEE: IN WHOSE HEART ARE THY
WHO GOING THROUGH THE VALE OF
USE IT FOR A WELL, AND THE POOLS
LLED WITH WATER. THEY WILL GO
STRENGTH TO STRENGTH
2ND GOD OF HOSTS, BLESSED IS THE
T PUTTETH HIS TRUST IN THEE."

Victory over Self	•
Self-sought Strength and God's Strength	•
Divine Light	•
What God asks of us, and what we should ask of God	•
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The New Life in Jesus Christ	•
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"Perfect Love Casteth out Fear"	•
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<i>God Only</i>	<i>•</i>
<i>Continual Prayer</i>	<i>•</i>
<i>Confidence in God</i>	<i>•</i>
<i>How we must love God</i>	<i>•</i>

The World
The Human Heart
Temptation
Self
The Nothingness of Man
Generosity
Simplicity
Obedience
Humility
On the Right Use of Time
The Blindness of Man
The Weakness and Corruption of Man
Detachment
Little Things
The Use to be made of our Faults
Spiritual Guidance
God

The Foundations of th

GOD has given us the liberty, to the end use it to His service; and never so safe as when we trust to Him, setting self-will all to Him: "for we know work together for good to God." Self-rule will prove over, those who choose to be responsible for the consequences however serious; whereas we need nothing save peace loves us far more than we can and He watches over us with Father's love. Trust in Him possible for devil or man to

All peace and happiness depend upon unreserved self. If this be hearty and entire be an unfailing, ever-increasing which nothing can disturb. happiness in this life, save result of a peaceful heart

H. L.

A

... this peace is
disturbed by many things,
God's judgments, or the changes
of life. But the soul which
and without reserve to God
His Own Peace ; and inas-
prone to grow like that to
closely united, the closer we
so much the stronger and more
more tranquil shall we become.
cleave to the things of this world
tossed about with the waves
uncertainty — God Alone is
Unchangeable, and he who
will never be confounded.

Of our own strength we are
able of doing good either in
small, but it is safest to aim
leaving God to call us to serve
things, when He ...

... attention, as to
... better than in far more
things done with a less pure
Surely it needs but to meditate
holy household of Nazareth to reach
truth, while God's own Word tells
"he who despiseth little things, shall
little and little." Let your aim be to
our Dear Lord perfectly in little things,
to attain a spirit of childlike simplicity
dependence.

One great hindrance to growth in
love is self-love. It is chiefly thereby
that Satan gets a hold over us ; and all his
spect, the fatal snare of so many
things from no other source. All
things with those whom He leads in
the paths of the spiritual life tend to
self-love ; as, on the other hand, the
culties and inward

giving us the means
overcoming it. Thus
force of self-love until
tearing it out of our he
co-operate with His Gr
speedily fill the vacant pl
the whole soul is His or
that soul realises the prom
"pure in heart"—and
Such a soul may suffer,
joyfully, unresistingly, and
take away that peace of
"My peace I give you :
giveth, give I unto you."
It will be profitable to r
degrees of the spiritual life
God deals

... again
... be troubled, and the s
self-resource, all self-confiden
... too the devil tempts the struggl
th impure thoughts or lurking
der the pressure of which it is
lieve that we are not consenting
il one. It may be that the stre
th temptations increases, while we s
selves capable of less and less resis
are aghast at the sight of our own
, and imagine that God must reject
love finds no rest for the sole of its
scarce knows how to serve God
self only, while so devoid of all tan
ort. This condition will last prol
the soul learns not to thin
dwell in God.

to us perfected beyond all that the heart of man can conceive. Even as an earthly parent might test and try the love of a favourite child, by seeming harshness, and then finding it unchangeable, would redouble his tenderness and affection, so does God deal with His children. Self-interested, calculating love, is not the "perfect love" which alone is worthy of God. That love knows neither limit nor measure, human prudence cannot restrain it, it reaches out to "the foolishness of the cross." That was the love wherewith Jesus loved us : and be sure that whatever we lose in this life for His sake we shall win for all eternity ; but what deny Him here, will be lost to us *forever hereafter.*

True Devotion

BY "devotion," I mean a so-
litude of God, and there can be no
of expressing perfect readiness to
all things for Him to Whom we
selves. All earthly devotion (I
of such as is lawful and permitted
necessarily limited; but there is no
mit to our devotion to God: the
at a shadow of reserve or hesita-
it ceases to be true self-devotion.
zeal devotion, then, consist-
liness to do and consist-
ption or

as of readiness to obey the dictates of the Voice. Thus it is impossible to attain devotion without an interior and recollected spirit, which is ever seeking to possess itself in peace ; and those who give way to things of sense, imagination or passion in that which is lawful, will never attain that devotion whose first work is attaining mastery over the senses, the passions and the mind. If you will look at devotion from this point of view, you will see that he who is inquisitive, restless, busy about other affairs ; or given to criticise and dispute with his neighbours, gossiping, ill-natured, slave-like, contemptuous, proud and sensitive, dissatisfied, opinionated, the slave of respect, and consequently irresolute and changeable—such a man, I say, is not devout in the true sense of the word.

thinking of God, which is an impossibility here on earth,—but his heart will always be united to God, and all his actions will be regulated by God's Holy Spirit. In meditation, he is not dependent upon books or methods, or intellectual efforts, scarcely even upon those of the will: his soul need only look within, and there is God—and God's peace. At times he may feel spiritual dryness, but that peace will always be real and blessed notwithstanding. He will rejoice more in prayer which has its measure of suffering, and wherein self-love finds no resting-place, than in such as is merely an indulgence to the imagination. Such a man never seeks himself in serving God, but realises the precept of the "Imitation"—"Wherever you find yourself renounce yourself." He

... where God's Glory and
our welfare is concerned.

The really devout man does not
hurry himself with vocal prayers and re-
citations, which leave him no breath.
He aims at constant freedom of
action; is neither scrupulous nor over-
bold; moves on his daily road in simple
confidence. He is firmly set
on nothing God asks of him, to yield
way to self-love; never to be guilty
of deliberate fault; but at the same
time does not torment and worry him
with petty vexations. If he falls into sin
he does not fret over it, but rising
in a humble spirit, he goes on his
rejoicing. He :-

—he would rather cry out lovingly
 d, appealing to His tender pity.
 eally devout man has a horror of
 ut he has a still greater love of that
 is good; he is more set on doing
 s right, than avoiding what is wrong.
 us, large-hearted, he is not afraid
 ger in serving God, and would rather
 e risk of doing His Will imperfectly
 ot strive to serve Him lest he fail in
 empt. The outer life of such a man
 be thoroughly attractive to others.
 uld be simple, honest, straightforward,
 ending, gentle, kindly :—his conversa-
 eerful and sensible, he would be ready
 e in all blameless mirth, indulgent to
 e sin.

certain that true devotion is never
 y either in itself, or as regards others.
 ould he who is in possession of real
 erness, be sad? Earthly passions,—

Some conscious religious emotions, they make no question but that they are really holy, never stopping to ascertain whether the emotions are from God, or merely the act of their own hearts. Yet often such persons are liable to many faults unperceived by themselves, and which it would not be easy to make them see. They may be narrow-minded, pharisaically precise in their decisions, full of self-esteem, touchy, self-conceited, obstinate, unyielding or affected in outward manner, — altogether deficient in truthfulness, simplicity, and reality, yet while they secretly esteem themselves more highly than other men, and they may even despise and condemn the true piety of others, which they are unable to perceive.

in His servants even to this day; for whoe gives himself wholly to God, and seeks earnestly to lead an interior life, runs a risk of drawing down jealousy and criticism, perhaps calumny and persecution, upon himself.

If you would realise perfect holiness, seek it as set forth in Jesus Christ. He is our only Example, and it was to give us such an example that He took upon Himself the form of man. All holiness which is not shaped and formed upon that model, is false and unacceptable to God, and if it deceives man it can never deceive God, or win an entrance into Heaven. Be it yours to study holiness with Jesus for your Teacher, and be not slack in asking Him for light and grace, that you may learn His lesson perfectly.

Jesus "pleased not Himself" (Rom. 15. 3). He never sought His own pleasure or gain;—no single deed of His was wrought with a view to the praise of man, that He might shun man's wrath. God the Father, His Will, His Glory, were the objects of the Saviour's every movement. He came not to do My own Will, but the Will of Him that sent Me." Our great Example has taught us that holiness is inward—it

but in a deep honest conviction, which
vent in action ;—in an entire sacrifice *Of s*
to God, a boundless love and charity to *warm*
men. Such was the spirit of the Saviour's
Life. He fulfilled every tittle of the Law,
but meanwhile He taught by word and deed
that all such observance must spring from
inward love, or it is no better than slavish
obedience. He has taught us to esteem this
life as a mere pilgrimage—a passage—a time
of probation in which our love to God may
be ripened. He “minded not earthly
things ;”—He taught us not to be anxious
for the morrow, but to rest wholly on His
Father's good Providence. Jesus voluntarily
embraced that life which men shrink from
most, and which they seldom endure save
from necessity. He did not condemn riches,
but He gave the preference to poverty. He

...erently, nothing
...simple, plain, or unaffected t
...eds and words of our Lord. He
...as one having authority ;" but it w
...gly, in a familiar way, without po
...splay ; His miracles were often :
...cret, and His apostles and evangelists
...d by the Holy Spirit to record His e
...story with the same striking simplicity
Remember too His tender compassio
...true penitents—" I came to call, not
...hteous, but sinners to repentance." Th
His pitying goodness to the publican
y Magdalene, to the Samaritan, to
ian taken in adultery ; and compare
His condemnation of the Pharise
; their avarice and hypocrisy. Rem
oo how patiently He bore with
ness and frailties of His own apost
our point of view."

... holy life; to be silent when we
are not necessary; to leave our justifica-
tion with God; to put aside all bitterness
and resentment; to render good for evil; to
forgive those who injure us, and believe that
we are but instruments working out God's
will upon us. Such conduct as this is worth
being called holy, and God seldom sends
trials until a man has been long proved
and moulded. Blessed are they who end
"If ye suffer with Him, ye shall also
rejoice with Him." It can only be through
altogether extraordinary grace that any
one is able to accept such trials gladly, still
to desire them. Let us rather be content
with our "day of small things," see
nothing lofty for our weak purposes,
daily imploring God that no human reason
may ever make us unfaithful to the
which we owe to Him.

How to attain Real and Steadfast

I. **T**HE first means, which although the most ordinary, is the hardest, is to will so to attain. The will must be sincere, hearty, effectual, persevering; and such a will is no thing. We deceive ourselves into thinking we have it, while really we have only wishes and desires; which are very different from a firm resolute will. I wish to be religious, but after the fashion of the world, I wish to be

— do not fancy t
a good preparation fo
fettered by the acts of
books:—such acts are us
whose attention is wand
communicate but rarely,
not the habit of recollecti
are accustomed to pract
will often prepare for and
Communion more devoutly
of books.

VI. A sixth means of pr
reading, for which a wide
you. It is well to select suc
your heart, and rouse it to
gues on Perfection is a usefu
ners, and for th-

so as to confine an
mind.

VII. The seventh means is
of the heart. All our instinct
corruption of our nature are so
supernatural progress, and would
us to self-love and self-indulge
we must keep up a perpetual
against impressions from without
tion within. You cannot be too w
your heart and all its movemen
such watchfulness may be toilso
you grow in recollection and in re
God's Presence, it will become eas

VIII. An eighth means is frequ
tation on the virtues of humility a
taking the Blessed Virgin as an
of whom Holy Scripture tells us
is "blessed among women"
remembrance "

common more directly interest the
of books.

VI. A sixth means of progress is spiritual
reading, for which a wide field is open
you. It is well to select such books as touch
your heart, and rouse it to fervour. *Regu-
lar on Perfection* is a useful book for be-
ginners, and for those more advanced the
tation, the works of S. Francis de Sales,
Surin, and the Lives of the Saints, to
nothing of Holy Scripture above all.
spiritual reading should in some respects
like a meditation, that is to say, you
watch for God's action within you,
when you feel your heart touched
you read. ALWAYS READ WITH A

such watchfulness may be tedious, but as you grow in recollection and in realisation of God's Presence, it will become easy.

VIII. An eighth means is frequent meditation on the virtues of humility and purity, taking the Blessed Virgin as an example, of whom Holy Scripture tells us that she is "blessed among women." A constant remembrance that God sends His angels to visit and protect us, will also be very profitable ; for they are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.

IX. Finally, it often may be very helpful to seek out some discreet spiritual adviser from whom you may receive counsel

...to advance in h
suitable guide; God wil
their need, if they pray to
the help they require, an
help with meekness and
a hearty will and wise gui
scarce fail to advance in
ness.

Victory over Self

"From the days of John the Baptist until, the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and violent take it by storm."—MATT. XI. 11.

WHILE on the one hand our Lord Jesus made our access to Heaven easy by the outpouring of grace and love He gave to His disciples, on the other hand He made the path thereto more strait and narrow than before, perfecting the law and raising it to a higher standard than that of Moses. Therefore from the days of the Baptist, who preached the Coming Saviour, the Kingdom of Heaven has been won through the violence done to self, and it is only through such victory that "the violent take it by storm." Hard indeed this is to nature which must be unrelentingly thwarted, and may be even to blood. If God's Servant meant no more than a certain devotional routine, readily fitting in with an easy comfortable life, and with the indulgence of self-love and self-esteem, we should have more saints in the world—that is, more real Christians, more sincere

... incomparably hard
came not to send peace, but
said (Matt. x. 34) ; and He
that sword and circumcise o
cutting away our corrupt aff
pity, until the old Adam peris
Now this is hard to receive
There are many persons wh
enough to say certain prayers, f
and practise some works of ch
religion costs little. But as
more of them ;—the correction
victory over human respect, a bric
restraint of natural impulses, and
is at once proclaimed severe, ha
rant. Yet the gist of Christi
this severity—
self :

Victory over Self

25

hard or difficult. But in a while, when the soul is able to bear such a sight, God lays bare its faults, He puts aside the veil which concealed them, and inspires the growing Christian with an earnest mind to overcome them. Thenceforward the inward struggle begins ;—bent upon conquering self, the soul pursues it unrelentingly wheresoever it is to be found, and by the help of God's Light, it is found everywhere. We see nought save imperfection, self-seeking obstinacy, our very devotions full of faults. We thought we loved God, and now our love for Him seems but another form of selfishness ; we love His

training us to the war, but now to the battle-field. How long will it last? So long as there is a foe, so long as the old man, the natural life, is not destroyed. A man never lays down his arms,—he is only ended with his strength; exhausted, and he can do no more. He is passive in God's Hand, Which will work in him that to which he cannot attain. The first steps are won by our own efforts stimulated—the final ones are wholly the work of God. Man does what he can, but in the end all work must be earthly, God only heavenly, and substitutes His own work, nothing save submission. We suffer, because God is dealing with us; we no longer do violence to ourselves, we endure violence, and this is harder to bear, for the soul is under the consciousness of voluntary action.



which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). But on the other hand, it is no less true when we are strong in our own confidence, we are indeed weak; when we fancy ourselves able to do and bear all things of our own strength and glory in our strength, then is there a state of utter weakness, for God without support from presumption, and we are alone.

In fact, then, our own strength is weakness, absolute weakness, and it is of no avail save humiliating falls; while confidence in God, together with a lowly spirit, is true strength, God's strength. Are you tempted to ask

will us t
ness? B
fect in we
God, the
holy; and
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fication, H
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mislead us
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mistrust o
fidence in
marvellous
in the clear

... unless God came to the rescue
would do so.

Such trials as these are repeated, un-
length the soul fully realises its own po-
lessness to do anything alone, and its ne-
total dependence on God. One while
trial comes in the shape of a temptatio-
which we are on the point of yielding;
then God upholds us when we thought
was over with us;—another time pas-
which we flatter ourselves were extinct, I
out anew and all but overpower us.
countless lesser imperfections humble
we feel a strange repugnance, almost a
ust, towards what is right, our prayers
ligious exercises are irksome and
and this is God's way of humbling us in
n conceit, and of teaching us that, wi-
s Grace, we are capable of all evil in-
wholly incapable of the smaller
d, or hope or thought. Ther-
many a fall, the soul has I
n, and we are freed from

and God's Strength

God gradually gives us His own Strength, ever reminding us that it is not ours, but only His. And so we learn to bear sufferings, humiliations, toil, and weariness for God's Sake and the good of souls; difficulties cannot hinder us, dangers cannot appal us, and that because it is no longer we who labour and suffer, but God in us. Such one gives Him all the glory, believing himself to be but a frail instrument in Divine Hands. It was in this spirit that St. Paul enumerated all his great toils and sufferings in the Gospel, adding, "I am nothing . . . but the grace of God which was with me." But a man must have passed through any a fiery trial, and be dead indeed to self, before he can attain to such a point. Those who do so attain, what is left save a ceaseless song of praise! they are one with God, He is in them, and self has ceased to exist.

How are we to approach such a state? First of all there must be a complete self-denial.

own reluctance to do right, but rather earnestly to overcome it, not taking credit for ourselves for any such victory—but humbly thanking God for it. Finally, we must equally avoid presumption and cowardice; the one springs from overweening self-confidence, the other from imperfect confidence in God. Both alike are met by the same remedy—a constant recollection that God is the Source of all strength. Who can presume who knows that his strength is in no sense his own? who despair, knowing that God is All-Powerful, All-Mighty, has promised us His Strength, and His Strong Salvation?

¹ “Da quod jubes, et jube quod vis.” (Co

Divine Light

TURN to the 119th Psalm, all important David held to be for the interior life. "Grant me understanding, that I may keep Thy statutes, and I shall shew the Light of Thy Countenance, and teach me Thy statutes." To a full perception of our need Light, we must remember how human has been darkened since Adam's fall that no earthly wisdom can us in the hidden us to

live to be your own guide, and walk by the light of your own reason. Nothing but blind presumption will come of that; but honestly give up your own will, in obedience to God's Voice within your heart, and follow whithersoever it leads you, you will be in the right way.

You must continually seek Divine Light for it on every occasion, great or small, undertaking nothing without it. In earlier stages of the interior life, it is generally abundant; it flows in upon you in the Holy Communion; you are surprised to find how clear the mysteries of the hidden God are made to you. You have an inner conviction that it is a true light, for you feel that it is in no sense your own, or the result of your own efforts or penetration, and

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not choose you to claim it a moment
a blessing which you can
The Spirit of God cannot
subject to our control : y
patiently, certain that He will
in the hour of need.
It is well to make a rule to y
speak of these lights to other m
pretext of giving God glory or of
them. This is a delusion to
None save those whose calling
should aim at guiding their neigh
less under a very distinct and spe
tion : the lights which guide you m
calculated to enlighten other me
path may be unlike yours. Morec
waste our grace by too readily
around us. Of course
that you should
ward

way to imagination and your own opinion, mistrusting your reason and judgment. God usually communicates Himself sparingly to people who are always reasoning and judging for themselves. The best use of reason in spiritual matters is to offer it silent at the foot of the Cross. God makes Himself known chiefly to those who are lowly and child-like in heart. He cares nothing for profound learning, or brilliant talents, inasmuch as they are sanctified by being offered to Him. He would have us leave aside all human knowledge, confessing that we know nought save through Him. The greatest saints have ever sought God with the spirit of little children, while many, from our weak arrogance, think ourselves qualified for judging God's ways of dealing

1 2 Cor. xi. 14.

... our spiritu
How can we fail to prostr
before God? as David says,
mouth, and drew in my bre
Thy word goeth forth, it giv
understanding to the simple."²
involves a perpetual confession
Light and the Truth—we all
falsehood. Believing this we ca
wrong. Let us say, then, with D
Thy servant, O grant me underst
I may know Thy testimonies."
keep Thy law unless I know it,
I know it unless Thou grant me
ing. Who save Thyself can tea
to fulfil it, either towards Thee
my neighbour? "G"
and I sh

THIS is a most necessary point to attain in the spiritual life. For want of a clear understanding of what God expects from us, and what He allows us to expect from Him, many grievous doubts and perplexities arise, needless discontent or unjust dissatisfaction with self, murmurs against God, and even despair. Now, one thing is certain: God expects nothing from us save that which is in our power—and that is reduced to a single thing—*i.e.* a right use of free-will, guided by enlightening grace. First, subject to this definition, He requires that we give good heed to the action of our own hearts, and to His Voice speaking therein; and this attention hard to those who love Him, and wish to please Him. He requires that we should not give ourselves up to any thing which is calculated to distract this attention—*whether it be amusement, curiosity, idle speculations, or voluntary excite*

...of providential ties, need necessarily
der this inward recollection ; habit will
it part of yourself amid all outer claims.
Next God requires a full, hearty co-
pondence with such grace as He sup-
der our present circumstances. The begin-
ies with varying needs. He is different
is different from that of an advance-
stian ; and his again is not the same as
granted to one far on in the path of
tion. Mental conditions and external
es which are suitable to one state
itual life are not suitable to another
must learn to accustom
according to

temptation, humiliation
trial with which He is purifying
rather to ask courage to bear it to t

Above all, He requires self-ren
in all things and for ever. But, in
there are many degrees of renu
which rise in intensity until the s
itself in God, our safest course is to
a general resolution of sacrificing
He may ask, without forecasting a
gining all sorts of things which ma
happen. This is useless, because w
foresee the future, or tell what might
material or spiritual attitude unde
imaginary circumstances; and dan
because it exposes us to the risk of p
tion or discouragement.

what we should ask of God

less must you fancy that such prayers and communion are worthless. Self-love may pronounce them to be so, but God judges otherwise. He does not require us to have so absolute a control over our imagination wholly to rule our thoughts. That is beyond our power, but it is within our power not to dwell upon distracting thoughts, to turn from them, to submit to spiritual advice. It is within our power to resist thoughts which militate against purity, faith or hope. There are temptations which God permits for our ultimate gain. We may ask with S. P. to be delivered from them ; but if the answer should be, "My grace is sufficient for thee" we must bear them meekly, resisting their assaults with the help of such means as obedience furnishes.

Again, in all events which depend upon external causes—His Providence or other men's will—God requires us to submit, and to turn them as best we may to His Glory :

God, be sure that we know our need, and that our safest course is all to Him—asking such good things as He teaches us to seek, and seeking with holy indifference as to all that concerns our spiritual progress. We must ask a true knowledge of ourselves ; what He is and what He has done for us and what we have done to offend Him ; His will and the blessing of His Grace, and how to use it of rightly using it. Then with perfect confidence in Him, say with Job, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.” We must serve Him unselfishly, for He is to believe in Him unquestioningly, through whatever darkness may come upon us. And we should have a spirit of obedience as may be, not our own will and judgment.

God's Dealings with the Sinner

*"Behold I stand at the door and knock
that man hear My Voice, and open the door, I will
come in to him, and will sup with him, and he will
be with Me."*
-Rev. iii. 20.

DURING our whole earthly life, (our
unfailing desire is to "come in
to His heart, and reign there: not for His
—what need of us has He for that
that we may be happy, not only hereafter
in this life. Faith, experience, reason
prove to us, that there is no true
rest to be found for man
except that we

our safest course is to maintain a general resolution of sacrificing whatever He may ask, without forecasting what might happen. This is useless, because we cannot foresee the future, or tell what might be our material or spiritual attitude under such imaginary circumstances; and dangerous, because it exposes us to the risk of presumption or discouragement. True self-renunciation leaves all the future to God, and only seeks to do its plain duty at the present moment.

God does not require sensible devotion of us, or any of those glowing religious emotions which are too often a subile food to self-love. All such gifts are His alone, He can give and recall them as He sees fit; therefore do not be troubled when you are *dry, dull, unable to rouse yourself to any holy thoughts in prayer or communion.*


...make them worthless. Self-pr
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so absolute a control over our imagin
wholly to rule our thoughts. That is
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God, be sure that we know not
need, and that our safest course is to
all to Him—asking such good things
teaches us to seek, and seeking to pr
holy indifference as to all that does
cern our spiritual progress. Above
must ask a true knowledge of God
ourselves ; what He is and what v
what He has done for us and what v
done to offend Him ; His claims u
the blessing of His Grace, and the imp
of rightly using it. Then we sho
perfect confidence in Him, so that w
say with Job, “Though He slay me, y
I trust in Him.” We must ask to lo
serve Him unselfishly, for His sole
to believe in Him unquestioning, un
ing, through whatever

God's Dealings with the Soul

"Behold I stand at the door and knock; if a man hear My Voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with Me."
—REV. iii. 20.

DURING our whole earthly life, God's unfailling desire is to "come in" to our heart, and reign there: not for His Own sake—what need of us has He for that? it that we may be happy, not only in this life. Faith prove to us, that Faith



The New Life in Jesus Christ

S. PAUL continually reminded his converts that in Baptism they were with Christ, and rose again in the likeness of His Resurrection. We, too, are "partakers of His Death;" our aim is that we shall enter into the likeness of that His Glorious Resurrection. To that end, we must be conformed to His Death, which was in truth only consummated on the Cross. His whole earthly life was a mystical drama.

God's Dealings with the So

art in Me, and I in Thee." Or, again, close intimate intercourse expressed in words, "I will sup with him, and he Me;"—I will feed him with Divine food shall live the very life of God. But what sufficient to speak of such ineffable mystery? We can but marvel and adore.

Let us remember, moreover, that he who would reign with Jesus must first suffer with Him;—he must first die to self, and to the sensitiveness of self-love. All the manifold trials with which God visits us are with a view to this perfect purification of the soul. Such trials are needful—for in no other way can we cast aside self;—but they are hard to bear—unbearable, indeed, unless we sustain ourselves up by passing them to

S. . .verts that in Baptism they were buried with Christ, and rose again in the likeness of His Resurrection. We, too, are "planted into the likeness of His Death;" our hope and aim is that we shall enter into the grace of that His Glorious Resurrection. But to that end, we must be conformed to His Death, which was in truth only consummated on the Cross. His whole earthly sojourn was a mystical death. In like manner our new life in Jesus Christ must be a continual death to self; a dying daily to all sins and imperfections, to the world and its attractions, to the senses and bodily indulgences, to our natural disposition and besetting faults, to all self-will, to self-love or high esteem of self, even to spiritual consolations, to *certainly as to our soul's condition, and to all that we can call our own in the highest matters of religion.* It is as we advance in

The New Life in Jesus

such death to all this side the grave, the hidden life of Christ springs up and ; in us ; and when the last step is won raises up the soul and imparts to it, even this world, the glories of His Resurrection.

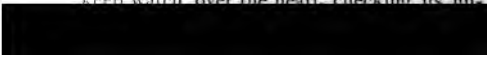
I. We must die to all sins and imperfections however seemingly trivial. The first resolution of one who gives himself wholly to God must be never to give way deliberately to fault whatever ; never to act in defiance of conscience, never to refuse anything God requires, never to say of anything, It is too small for God to heed. Such a resolution is the essential foundation in the spiritual life : I do not mean but that in spite of it we shall fall into inadvertencies, infirmities, errors ; but we shall rise up and go on as if from such faults—because they are involuntary, the will has not consented to them.

II. Again, we must die to the world and its attractions ; that is, we must neither love nor seek it, giving no place to it. This is required of every one who is serious about his soul.

point on which you must examine yourself closely and unsparingly.

IV. Death to the senses and excessive bodily indulgence. This involves watchfulness against love of ease and comfort, a restricted use of what is superfluous in food, dress, sleep ; such mortifications as you may be advised to practise ; above all, a check upon the unrestrained liberty we often give to our eyes and ears, and upon whatever tends to undue excitement.

V. Death to our natural disposition and besetting faults. It is no small enterprise to overcome these, and many a saint of God has not achieved the task ere he is called from this world. Every good man is not an Augustine or a François de Sales, in whom grace triumphed utterly over nature. But the best way to set forward this work is to keep watch over the heart, checking its un-



Then, in spiritual things, you must accept what God gives, and remain where He places you, without wishing for anything different; you must not criticise the workings of God's Grace; but follow its leadings willingly and readily; your active mind must be restrained; you must refrain from self-dissection and perpetual reasonings about yourself, seeking rather Divine Guidance; you must avoid merely intellectual reading (in the matter of spiritual books), aiming more to feed your soul than to satisfy a restless curiosity, which often leads to errors and delusions. Strive to remember that God will give you exactly the light you need, and be satisfied therewith. If your

¹ Thus a holy man writes to one who had sought spiritual advice of him, "If you can learn to walk slowly and speak slowly, I shall have hopes of you."

seek us. "Who hath
S. Paul asks.⁴ We
e things which concern
ess in those which are
t and groundwork of
xi. 35.

saken of God, you will easily go through great trials. But if you have no such comfort, if you feel as though God hid His face from you, as though you were lost to all hope, then indeed it requires a heroic courage to persevere, and say, God's Will be done.

X. Death to all we can call our own holy things. Perhaps you have appropriated God's gifts, and rejoice in them as though they were your own? But God strips you of them—not really, but to outward appearance, and you are no longer conscious of any good, or good, natural or supernatural. You know not what you are, or were, or will be—you can see nothing save sin, hollowness, judgment. When you have accepted this meek submission, your mystical death is attained—and then will follow resurrection and life. But these are God's own mysteries. Let us not presume to do more than fall down and worship Him.

we have any control is in
and it is now that we must
erate with our Dear Lord's

first to seek us. "Who hath
him?" S. Paul asks.⁴ We
in the things which concern
s no less in those which are
e root and groundwork of
Rom. xi. 35.

the right road ourselves. Or, if we retained our baptismal grace, it is but to the never-failing supply of actual which He vouchsafes to give us. Or requires us to acknowledge that every natural action must needs be inspired guided by grace, and that grace is withheld save as a punishment. We, weak creatures, can do nothing save Him faithfully, and cherish the loving He gives, with adoring humility.

These gifts are solely for our benefit. gains nothing through what He gives us the return He demands is for our sake His. Yet how often have we abused gifts ! how impossible it is for us to

...gives the soul which has misused
gifts, and all the time He is ready to
forth fresh graces if it will but return to
So it was with David and S. Peter, so it
is with all who come to Him in penite
love. But then we must give ourse
irrevocably to Him, there must be no dr
ing back, no shrinking, no regret; rather
ever pressing-forward, eager desire to g
Him more and more, until there is noth
left to give. What matter whether we a
conscious or not that God accepts our offe
ng? Grant that He seems to ignore i
Nevertheless, we know that He would hav
s make it, and that He is worthy of all an
more than we can offer. We may forsake Him
it He never forsakes us—His weak sh
unders from Him, but C
d love

weakness? Dear Lord, uphold me
through all my endless perils of in-
impetuous faults, and through all my
frailty. May I never for one instant
Thee deliberately, or reject Thy
withhold whatsoever Thou askest
How can I but fear my own weakness
Thou rule and guide me in all things
I be faithful to Thee through all
and cleaving to Thee with steadfast
may I be carried through all the
this life, and rest with Thee for ever

A Childlike Spirit

THE first step towards the inner life is to attain a childlike spirit in Heavenly things. Our Saviour told His disciples that "except ye become as little children, shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven;" and again He said that "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." But this childlike spirit is not to be understood save by experience—it is solely God's gift, and no effort of the intellect or will can produce it.

A little child does not reflect or argue—has no foresight, no prudence, no malice. Even so in spiritual childhood. God's

as it is capable of any dissimulation, the childlike nature is gone. And it is the same in the spiritual order of things. He who has a childlike spirit is free from all affectation and constraint—his actions, words, and manner are all perfectly natural—he means what he says—he keeps his word—he does not seek to hide his faults, or to appear other than what he really is, and he is devoid of all the reserve of pride.

A child expresses love and affection without restraint or pretence : and so the childlike soul in all simplicity pours itself out before God in unstudied heartfelt love ; he

usual things a childlike spirit renounces
own will for that of God, however that
take shape. He does not seek to rule
own course, but gives himself unreser-
y to be guided by the Holy Spirit, and
God's chosen minister to his soul ; while
eternals he willingly yields his own will
that of others, save where he knows a
g to be God's Will, and then indeed he
firm as a rock. A child has but little
knowledge, and no self-inspection—he
es simply as he is—and so the childlike
t is not given to self-contemplation, but
er goes on from day to day content with
light as God gives him for the immediate
ssity. He does not judge of the earnest-
of his prayers or communions by the
ement of his feelings, leaving all such
ment to God, but goes on quietly through

and wholly confiding in those it love
the childlike Christian knows himself
utterly weak, unable to go one step
So he never trusts himself, but puts
confidence in God, keeping ever near
stretching out his hand for help and st
in every difficulty. He takes no cre
himself for the good he may do, c
victories he may gain, knowing them
God's. He does not esteem himself
other men, realising that were God to
raw His Hand, he would assuredly fal
very conceivable sin, and believing th
those around had the grace given to him
ould use it far better than he does.
nowledge of his own

happy without consciousness of it. They are
happiness, all thought and care they
those who love them. So the child
enjoys a most real unsought happiness
which God Himself pours upon it, calling
all to work together for good to
that love Him." No storms can shake
foundation, no earthly troubles move it.
Not that such a man is insensible to grief,
but that he is raised above its sharpness by his
entire resignation to God's Will. This is a
state which can only be known to those who
experience its sweetness, and in truth that
experience is beyond all words to describe.
"My God, I am Thine, now, henceforth and
ever. Suffer Thy child to come to Thee,
and dwell in Thy Presence, where alone
joy unspeakable, and rest and peace!"
"Out of the mouth of very babes and

while the proud intellectual Pharisee stood apart, blinded by prejudice and hardness of heart. And so among ourselves; the natural tendency of human reason is not to enter into the things of God; rather to despise and reject them, and strange as the assertion may seem, this continually happens among religious people, who are often as real opponents to the true interior life, as the Pharisees, with all their high professions of sanctity were to Jesus Christ and His Gospel.

No one truly enters into the things of God save through a childlike spirit, a spirit which tends to make its possessor feel incapable of arguing and reasoning, which fills him rather with a sense of weakness and ignorance than knows no rest save in God; a spirit ready to believe, to trust, to obey. Such a man goes calmly onwards by the light of faith, content not to "choose or see his path" his heart's prayer is—

"Keep Thou my feet, I do not ask to see
The distant scene,—one step enough for me."

Surely it was in such a spirit that St. Paul arose from the earth, seeing no man, he gave himself passively to be "led by hand, and brought to Damascus." No

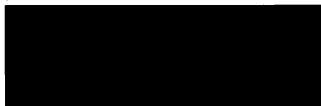
... , keener intelligence, a loftier g

of all intellectual processes than the w
race of man combined ; for when he
God's Grace for ever he did not lose
intellectual capacity—a capacity, in tr
which is part of his sentence, and does
add to his punishment. Those who l
never sought to attain true mental hum
are apt to imagine it impossible for ma
and powerful minds, but in truth they l
yet to learn how it lies at the root of all
Dear Lord's teaching, and how it has
been the path by which His Saints have t
to give heart and mind to God, so that
be ours no longer—to do good without b
conscious of it, to pray ceaselessly and w
t effort, as we breathe—to love with
opping to reflect upon our feelings—to
er onwards without pausing to measure
gress—such is the perfect forgetfulness
which casts us upon God, as a babe
n its mother's breast. It is not by c
ls, long prayers, or

liveth in me." But to this end we must give ourselves up to His dealing without reserve. Now, it may seem paradoxical to say that no man living enjoys such perfect liberty as those who are thus absolutely "led by the Spirit of God."¹ The world's liberty makes a fair show, but worldly men are more or less slaves to their passions and to human respect; and half-hearted Christians scarce know what freedom means. Every occasion of sin betrays them, every temptation overwhelms them, human respect thralls them—they wish to do right, but evil is too strong for them—and that is scarcely liberty when a man leaves the good he would do for the evil he would shun. Neither are self-willed people free, though they often imagine that they are—they are governed by their own restless, perverse imagination, they aspire to conscious warfare in their devotions, and failing to find it they are apt to murmur at themselves and at God. Moreover, such persons are for the most part scrupulous, undecided, ha-

¹ Rom. viii. 14.

subject, and yet in perfect liberty !
can these things be !” True liberty
perfection of human life, and truth
does not consist in the power of doing
which is rather a pitiful inheritance of
fallen nature. God, Who is Liberty,
cannot by any possibility do that
evil—how then can man’s freedom
such power ? The more a man is
Spirit of God, the more he is raised
true liberty which is God’s, and if
under such subjection of will, it is
to that proud spirit of independence
the angels fell. When once earthly
are chastened, self-will conquered, pr
dued, the voice of grace heard mo
within the soul than that of nature,
jection will cease to be irksome ; a
results never fail to be attained b
generous efforts to gain the mastery
senses and imagination. Then, i
man attains to a most blessed inde



...ions and the threats
world. Is not this to be free indeed
further, such a man becomes free as
himself ; he is no longer a victim to h
imagination, or the caprice of his will
is firm and resolved, his principles an
nions are deeply rooted, and tell upo
every action. God's Holy Spirit in
somewhat of Its own Immutable Charac
His weak creature, and though he ma
assailed by many an inward storm, his
remains firm as the Rock of his Salva
All this must be learnt by experience, bu
sure that those who give themselves wh
to God will be surprised to find, even a
early stage, how different they are to
they were. There is all

...ness of self, accept
"Asking nothing, refusing
said by one who drank deep
giving waters of His Will.
nothing can come amiss, not
move them. Who would not
freedom from earth's wear
restless pining heartaches, its
and even from the cares and
half-hearted Christian, who
even in doing God's Will, and
the "perfect liberty wherewith
made us free!"

‘Perfect Love Casteth out Fear’

GOD requires us to fear Him.

Scripture sets this fear before us usually. “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God.” “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, the beginning only; Love is the end thereof. Holy fear is one of the gifts of the Spirit, whereby He would fit us to receive His more perfect gifts. Thus we must seek to be filled with this holy fear. In body and soul, we must not be content to stop there, but continually aim at perfect love which purifies and transforms us to its own gracious image.”

motive of a Christian's life ;—God have a higher kind of service. He has our hearts to be governed by love—His great Commandment, the one only offering we can bring Him. Love alone draw us from earthliness, and lead us to Love alone softens, enlarges, raises, purifies the heart. The Christian's law consists of two things,—to shun that which is evil, and to do that which is good. Now fear may lead to the first, but it will never produce the second result ; while love does both. Love teaches us to “abstain from all appearance of evil” and to aspire after perfection, regard for difficulty and self-sacrifice. There is no generosity in fear—a literal abstinence from that which is forbidden seems to satisfy its claims ; but love would always find half a claim fold more to offer, and it counts its vessel as nought while some further sacrifice is made. Fear knows nothing of the refinement and exquisite sensitiveness of

that fear remains—but it is not a real punishment ; the loving heart fears God because it would grieve to offend so dear Father,—to do the smallest thing that could be ungrateful or displeasing to Him. So a soul fears to commit the most venial fault, the slightest imperfection, simply because a shadow of sin is contrary to God's Will ; and there is no armour so invulnerable to temptation as this sweet childlike fear. It produces a ceaseless watchfulness, a host of loving precautions against the most transient unfavourableness ;—it triumphs easily over difficulties, bursts earthly bondage, and passes victoriously through the snares of the world, the flesh, and the devil, reaching forth joyously to the One Sole Object of every effort and hope. But slavish fear could never effect any such result. Still more forcible is the desire to please Him we love. The loving soul is calm and peaceful, yet it is ever on the watch for occasions wherein to prove its love ; labour, suffering, sacrifice—all is welcome so long as it can please its Lord. Recognising self-will as His great enemy, love does violence to self on every side—for His Dear Lord. *It is thus that perfect love casteth out*

cleave to Him, and ask Him to enable you to turn this temptation to His greater Glory, by detaching you more and more from all that is of self. Such a course will assuredly bring you peace, and draw you closer to your only Strength and Hope.

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Holiness
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What Holiness is

UNDER the Law, God commanded His people to "be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy;"¹ and Jesus bade His disciples, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father Which is in Heaven is Perfect." The whole motive power and aim of holiness is set before us in these words; but we cannot enter into their depths save through the light of grace, nor will anything teach us their full meaning so well as the attempt to live by them. There is a perfection of symmetry in God's Holiness, and whatever is ill regulated and contrary thereto is displeasing to Him. He forgives our wanderings and inconsistencies when we repent and forsake them, but if we reject His Mercy and persist therein, He inevitably punishes them, because He is Holy. He has made us in His Own Likeness, and He requires us on our side to strive after the perfecting of this resemblance; He has endowed us with free-will and intelli-

¹ Lev. xix. 2.

...to approach
has made me for Himself, and
Him, therefore I owe Him ceaseless
I need Him perpetually, the
ever hope for Him ; I wait for Him
can find no rest save in Him.

I attain this blessed intercourse
Lord save through holiness?
soul is ever going farther and
Him, and He from it—and the
total separation from Him for ever.

Moreover, the work of Grace
me still nearer to Him than the
creation. God has given me
gifts ; He has made me with a
eternity spent in His Presence,
His Blessedness. How can I
f-

...truth, a
required of him as a Christian
times the Apostles, impressed w
addressed all believers as "C
could we dare now to use such
Christians? Are not too man
whose calling is the same as that
first followers practically enemi
holiness; and that while the sta
before them is God Himself? Re
is Christ Who said, "Be ye perfec
Father Which is in Heaven is Perfect
we be holy even as He is Holy?
no; but every action and thought
moulded, shaped upon His Exam
we can fulfil the pre
end that God

mean the gift ; they must leave
His Hand, as the clay in the potter's
or dying they must be His ;
perfect the good work He has begun.

He who has fully grasped the
God is All, and the creature
mastered the whole spiritual life
is to give to each that which is
God everything without reserve
creature simply nothing—and
perfect humility and perfect service
Grace. He who begins to
heartily to God, opens his eyes to
really is—not after a merely speculative
profitable fashion, but with a perception
reacts upon his whole life—

what God
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and ex-
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learn to
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which he alone of all creation possessés, and all the external benefits he enjoys, to God's service. So soon as man holds himself to be independent, and appropriates to himself the wondrous mental faculties with which he is endowed ; so soon as he uses the inferior creation with which he is surrounded other than as God wills ; so soon as he prefers the creature to the Creator, so soon he becomes a mere graceless rebel. Man ranks even lower in the order of grace than that of nature. By the order of grace this intelligent being, man, in spite of his own nothingness, is destined to the eternal possession of God—a destiny so sublime, so beyond all save supernatural grace, that nothing higher can

great knowledge ; and unless the use of Grace
is the means whereby to attain to this
end, we could never find the way.
Holy faith, its worship, its Sacraments,
God's appointment ; human reason could
have invented them, neither has it any au-
thority by which to institute them. Man
neither desire nor seek eternal life of him-
self. Grace must continually co-operate with
free-will. Even without the hindrance
of original sin, it must have been so—and how
much more under the tendency to evil,
the aversion to good which is the result of nat-
ural concupiscence? Ignorance, weakness, and
passion all tend to darken man's reason.
Without Grace he can do no good thing,
that grace is the free gift of Jesus Christ.
How often, too, original sin is strengthened
by years of fatal habits, unresisted tem-

...of things than that begin
God's Mercy originally saved us.
must tremble at the thought, who
great things of himself if he remem
he has been, what he would be witho
Help, what he may any day becom
trusts to his own strength rather tha
upholding Hand!


The Blessed Virgin the Interior

WE shall find a value in the interior life in Holy Scripture concerning the Blessed Virgin, "Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart."¹ We shall consider the moment upon what God did what she offered in return for His choosing her out to be the Mother of Christ; He gave her high honor, "The Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women;"² and He gave to her a place in the kingdom of heaven as none of the angels ever have.

In return, Mary offered to Christ her humility, and a submission to His will.

it unto me according to Thy word." She aimed at no great things, her "low estate" satisfied her, nor did she believe herself to be likely to be chosen for the very high honour a created being could ever know, to become the Mother of God. And in her hidden life, those only can serve God truly who realise their own poverty and helplessness, and rejecting every proud thought, look for nothing save His Grace. Mary's knowledge of her Son's sufferings began with His Birth, and followed her to Calvary, and beyond it. Most Christians fail to see much further than our Dear Lord's bodily sufferings upon the Cross, and His Mother's sorrow in beholding them; they lose sight of the lifelong expectation of those sufferings, of the ingratitude which pierced the Heart of Jesus when men "would not" be saved, of the mental agonies of the Saviour, and of the sword which pierced Mary's soul.¹ Yet all the while that she was afflicted by her Son's weight of anguish, a weight which none save God might bear, what was she external to? A poor Jewish woman, dwelling for thirty years at Nazareth in her homely simple home, later on without even that lowly home, des-

ways: Lowliness, obscurity, and
very precious in His Sight, and I
wont to use as His chosen instrum
who affect nothing, esteem the
nought, and shrink from earthly
than all others. Who can medita
life of our Dear Lord, regard His
Mother, and doubt it? Lowliness
of self-esteem, love of an obscure li
solitude, diligence in giving heed
things, faithfulness to Grace, to
recollection, total submission to C
complete self-sacrifice, all these
very essence of the true interior li
these we shall find more perfectly
Holy Mary, as recorded in the Wo
than in any other earthly example
us by the Holy Spirit. "Be
Mother." They are our Dear I
words. Let us take them in a child



Resignation

“**F**ATHER, into Thy Hands I commend
My Spirit.” It was at the moment
when our Blessed Lord’s earthly anguish had
reached its climax that He thus summed
the perfect sacrifice He had taken upon Him-
self, and gave utterance to that which had been
the ruling power of His Incarnate Life—to
submission to His Father. What act, how-
ever so full of pure disinterested love! Love
cannot be separated from faith and hope;
on the contrary, it perfects both in faithful
souls. There may be no definite conscious-
ness thereof, but the reality is assured
there; and the true interior life, while
tends to deepen and ripen love, confirms faith

let us respect what we cannot understand, and abstain from rash judgments, remembering that what is impossible with men is possible to God.

God repeatedly makes Himself known to us in Holy Scripture as a Jealous God—jealous of our heart and mind, requiring that we give Him, not a barren, speculative homage, but such worship as will influence every act and thought of our lives. Intellectual homage consists in acknowledging that God is All in All, the Beginning, the End of all things, *and that without Him nothing is.* It consists *in the prostration of all our faculties before*

RESIGNATION

Him, of every mental power, natural and supernatural ; in willing to see as He sees, judge as He judges ; in a continual death to self-will and self-chosen ways, to follow His Will. He exacts this homage with jealousy, and those who refuse it to Him, and choose to walk by their own light, are no better than rebels. All the fatal errors in faith and practice which distract Christendom have arisen because men in their pride of intellect have neglected "the True Light, Which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

The heart's homage consists in accepting God as the Source whence all affections flow, in loving Him wholly and with all our strength, and in loving all else in Him and subject to His Love. Such homage is the right, whether as our Creator, our Father, our Protector, and experience teaches every faithful soul that there is no happiness on earth for those whose hearts are not stationed on Him. All ill-regulated love becom

must be many a trial, many a struggle first, but he who perseveres, and who, having given himself to God, refrains from recalling the gift, will sooner or later be successful. God's Jealous Love never leaves its task unfinished, and the faithful soul may trust in Him that He will give "patience its perfect work." When self-love is uprooted, that Love is satisfied, and broods in blessing over its conquest. Heaven would be no longer Heaven if self-love could find entrance there.

Pure Love of God


PURE love is the Love of God, free from all intermixture of self ; consequently any act of love, whether it springs from hope, gratitude, or reverence, is pure so long as it is free from the love of self. None save God can tell whether we love Him heartily and purely ; He has seen fit to withhold a certainty as to our own mental state from us, in order that we may be humble and trusting. One thing is clear : true love and self-love cannot dwell together—whichever is strong will uproot the other. Self-love has its root in our own interests, it keeps them ever before our view. God is not its aim and end ; even in spiritual things it seeks Him but for its own gratification, its own advantage. In material things it tends to mortal sin ; in things altogether spiritual it produces imperfections and perversions. But the love of God is altogether pure in its origin, though varying in degree and inte-

advancing steps in self-rei
us into the interior life.
purifies His weak child ;—
draws spiritual consolation
Communion become d
slacken, our heart seems to
the soul is tempted to thin
God, and to give up all it
do this would be a proof t
seeking our own satisfaction
but the faithful soul will per
dryness steadily for love of
grow in Love of Himself, a
gifts.

After these beginnings,
draws all conscious delight
long intervals ; the soul cea
loves or is loved, all self-con
tends to feed self-love

ening and confirming—purity, faith, hope, charity towards our fellow-men, holiness, self-restraint. All these may encounter fierce temptations, but they are all external to the soul, and it is not really shaken by them. Still that fact is hidden from it; it fears lest it has consented to temptation, and however we may encourage it, such a soul remains fearful that it has sinned. Thus it becomes very prostrate, very humble in self-accusation and condemnation, and all high thoughts, all self-esteem, are thoroughly driven forth by a true, pure love of God; which makes the soul dread that, in spite of good intentions, it is displeasing Him. Meanwhile, in truth, that soul is as far as possible from consenting to sin, and by a true, most beautiful contrition, it is drawing close and closer to God.

Again, purifying love works through humiliations. One who has been highly esteemed by all around, suddenly finds himself slandered, and sunk in the opinion of those he



...the closest like
on the Cross—he too cried
my God, why hast Thou forsaken
he owns God's Power, he
this final sacrifice all earth
away, and God reigns Alone
heart. Beware however of
these severe trials are in
hope. It never fails and
temptations. God and
known by their works. Satan
is through pride, and he gains
the flesh. God begins with
the flesh, and His latter victory
annihilation of pride, even
terness of temptation. But
absent where His Hand was
that were to doubt His Grace

The Hidden Life of the Manger

THE interior life finds its lesson in the Manger no less than in the Cross ; the one contains the rudiments, the other the perfection of that life, and he who would attain the height must begin at the beginning. The Incarnate Lord has shown His interior dispositions in coming upon this earth—Love of His Father, love of men. “Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me : in burnt offerings and sacrifice for sin. Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God.”¹ That will was that I

— ~~must~~ a total setting aside of all
God, total renunciation of our
for those which are His. He
all that may be involved in this
we need not doubt that He
courage to accept and strength
ever He requires of us. Be it
ourselves without reserve to Him
with Christ, "How am I straitened
accomplished!"

The first Adam entered the world as a
man; the second Adam chose to
come as a little child, that we might
be as babes in dependence on His grace,
plicity, in obedience. As a Father
adored His Father no less perfectly
when He

... the Holy Spirit teaches
lessons of the interior life from
Saviour's first days on earth—from
stable, the poor swaddling cloth-
ing, suffering, neglect, the very
in which He first drew breath.
could we read so perfect a lesson of
from the good things of this world
contempt for earthly honours and
as that which Jesus set before Him
here? And that which He chose
first portion, He chose for all His
sojourn; He was poor, labouring
Own Hands, without a place where
His Head, unknown or despised
bearing all possible sufferings and
trials to the end. Remember, too,
we who were admitted into His
None without a special invitation
though to the very end.

babes in dependence on grace, in simplicity, in obedience. As a Babe, Jesus loved His Father no less perfectly than He spent nights in prayer, or on the cross, but it was a silent, passive adoration, which we should do well to remember when our pride is wounded, because we are powerless, unable to express ourselves in words. Such a mortified condition, so bitter and self-love, may be more acceptable to God than our seasons of warm, flowing devotion. We must wait in silent humility before the Presence of God, and is really to serve Him "in spirit and in truth." He does not need our glowing words and emotional imaginations, which feed self-complacency more than

prayer which is joined in intention to Child Jesus praying in His Manger, will bring us very near to God.

Again, the Holy Spirit teaches some great lessons of the interior life from the Infant Saviour's first days on earth—from the manger, the stable, the poor swaddling clothes,—humiliation, suffering, neglect, the very atmosphere in which He first drew breath. Where could we read so perfect a lesson of detachment from the good things of this world, of contempt for earthly honours and pleasures as that which Jesus set before His followers here? And that which He chose as His first portion, He chose for all His earthly sojourn; He was poor, labouring with His Own Hands, without a place wherein to lay His Head, unknown or despised of men, bearing all possible sufferings and persecutions to the end. Remember, too, who they were who were admitted into His Manger—None without a special, miraculous call, though to teach us that we cannot attain an interior life without our vocation being from God, and that those He calls must resemble the Shepherds of Galilee in lowliness and freedom from worldly longings; in vigilance, for it was during their night watch that

heavenly light, bowing before the
of the Star of Righteousness. God h
left His Church without some gl
examples of the interior life among cr
heads, and those crowned with th
nobler diadem of wisdom and learning
very sure it is, that they and all His
now surrounding the Throne of the La
Glory inconceivable, drank deeply a
well of lowliness which springs forth i
fresh streams of purity and life fro
cradle of our Incarnate Lord.



JESUS CHRIST gathered up the whole mystery of faith, hope, and love in man, when He said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." True Life, the eternal life of the soul, is our one real heart's aim, and Jesus tells us that He is that Life. What but Himself then should be the absorbing object of our love? That Life can only be attained by forsaking all that is false and delusive, and by cleaving stedfastly to the truth; and Jesus tells us that He is True Himself. Who but He can "lead us into truth"? How can we find this truth? Jesus Alone is the Way, and it was to be our guide along that narrow path that He came into the world.

His whole doctrine was summed up in two precepts—love of God and love of our neighbour. Love of God implies a rightful and true love of ourselves, inasmuch as to love Him is to love our only true good; but it banishes all earthly self-love, and leads to real detachment and sacrifice. "*He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.*"

¹ John xii. 25.

loved of God and of Jesus, and we love them with the same love as He which bears, suffers, forgives all things is ready to give even our very life and soul's sake. The whole Life of Jesus is this even more than His words. He is the very model of detachment, renunciation, humiliation, patience, tenderness, gentleness and forgiveness. And all His faithful servants have trodden in the same path, that the only way whereby to "put on Jesus Christ" is to follow Him as He follows to love Him as the Truth, to possess Him even in this world as the Life. There is One Way, One Truth, One Life. Those who seek another are wandering. "There is a way that leadeth unto life, and there is no mid-way, be sure ; follow one or the other. Blessed are they who take Jesus for their sole Guide. His Way will be trodden and passed in this world, the Truth and the Life will abide

BY the Interior Mind of Christ we mean that which was the principle and rule of His Life. It is the inner mind which stamps all our actions, and which causes the wide difference between things seemingly alike, according to the purity and holiness of the motives whence they spring. Jesus is the model of all Christians, and those who would study the interior life must seek to know what was His Mind. Holy Scripture reveals much of this to us, as regards His Father, Himself, and mankind. As regards His Father, Jesus ever offered Himself as a Victim to God's Glory and Justice. From His first coming into the world, S. Paul tells us, He offered His Body as a substitute for the sacrifices of the Old Covenant. His Will was wholly subject to that of God. "My meat is to do the Will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His

it be accomplished !” As reg
Incarnate Lord as He was, :
surpass His humility, His ab
readiness to bear all things. “
and no man, the very scorn of
outcast of the people.” As
kind, He was all love and g
grace and mercy, full of coi
forgiveness. His death was for
but it was also for each inc
“Greater love hath no man tha
man lay down his life for his :
He gave His for His enemies
we approach such an Example
humility, and love? How else :
with God? His union with C
vine :—man can be but huma
heartily seek it, if we give our
to Him, desiring only that which

God hath called his
patient trust and obedience. All
implied by union with God. That in
oneness with Christ, and our life will be
conformed to God, as was that of His
Son. Think what we mean when we
of being "perfect in the Likeness of Ch
"Behold what manner of love the F
hath bestowed upon us!"

On marvelous
empt really to the
rds in their full meaning.
art, so much more will the Savior
ise be fulfilled; and as the heart grows
oliness, so will it attain to an increased
knowledge of the depth of that wondrous
Presence within it. But if you ask who will
tell us what it is to have Jesus Christ dwelling
in us, and we in Him? there is but one
answer;—No created intellect can fathom
the mystery;—let us not seek to analyse;
let us rather seek so to live that it may
ours. That blessed Indwelling is intense
It is a union between Jesus Christ and
soul, such as cannot be found in the na-
tural order of things. His Body unites Its
our body, His Soul to our soul, His
our will, in a supernatural, transcendent

tions. But we must not think to measure this blessed Indwelling by the passing warmth of sensible devotion ; the only true test is the abiding condition of the soul. If you find that your Communion detach you more and more from the things of earth, if these become tasteless, wearisome to you ; if you advance in earnestness of purpose and steadfastness in duty ; if you live more in the spirit of a stranger and pilgrim journeying towards his Home, who only makes use of the rest and refreshment he needs by the way as a help to arrive there the sooner ;—if you come from the Altar with growing recollection, increased love of prayer, truer self-denial, decreasing self-complacency and self-will ; if your thoughts and feelings are becoming more conformed to the Mind of Christ, so that you instinctively measure all things by that standard, recoiling from the world and its maxims, shunning what it prizes, loving that which it rejects ;—if such are the result of your Communion

Communion will perfect the likeness to y^r Lord, and gradually you will be "transformed into His Likeness." Thus the real way which to gain all that which our Dear Lord promises in His Blessed Sacrament of Altar, is to strive after each Communion dwell more closely in Him, to give yourself up to the guidance of His Spirit, to seek His Gracious Help in every deed, word, and thought. All this requires a vigorous and sustained exertion, but it should be made calmly, without restless anxiety, or self-confidence, for our own efforts only hinder what they are in any sense independent of God's action in us. If you sincerely believe that Christ comes in Holy Communion to dwell within you, what better safety can you have than in committing all that concerns you unreservedly to Him? So long as you

EFFECTS OF HOLY COMMUNION

hearty as that with which He
What are we that we should make
worthy to receive our Lord, or to
fitting thanks when He has visited
come to us? There is no mental
profitable to our spiritual progress
formable to our blessed Faith,
renders so much glory to God, as it
places the soul unreservedly at the
Jesus, so that He is the motive
every thought and feeling, every
every act. This it is when "I live
I, but Christ liveth in Me."

Moreover, this wondrous Indwelling
result of Communion in His Body and
is like to the Indwelling of Christ
Father. "As I live by the Father
that eateth Me, even he shall live by
The Father is the Spirit of life to His
nate Word, and even so the Son is the
of life to those who eat His Body.
supernatural life which nothing save
can destroy.

Christian soul, let your
may indeed be

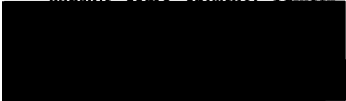
that this will make
so active as when God's Holy Spirit
us. Our own efforts soon slacken,—His only
are renewed day by day. But do not search
too curiously even into these, or be for ever
dissecting your own fervour. Sometimes it
is most real when we are least conscious of it.

It was that we might the better appreciate
how closely the Sacrament of the Eucharist
and the Cross are united, that our Dear Lord
instituted the former directly before His Pas-
sion. He made bread to be His Body, wine
His blood, that Blood which was about
the Cross. He said

... this Cross, that is, for his
and suffering, self-renunciation, and
salvation. Let this be the test of your
Communion. Do not hold them to be
because you have been kindled with
glowing feelings, but rather if you have
away with fresh courage to conquer
fight against your own will, to bear what
God may lay upon you; if, in short, you
more able to seek God for Himself,
willing to love His corrections as we
His favours. You may be certain that your
our Communion produce such results, if
is good, forwarding your own soul's
ness, and promoting God's Glory. If
es we are uneasy because
without any

our love of God is being purified from self-love. This is a most point to master, and make part of tical life.

The Body of Christ is the food our spiritual strength is sustained that that strength is the test that Communion is profitable. If such strength is to be used in overcoming our natural inclinations and sloth, our weakness, our inconsistency, our horror we have of all contradiction and humiliation; in short, all God's Grace within us. If this increases with each Communion, if we have more self-control, if we are less self-indulgent, more devoted, more patient, more steady resolutions, more indifferent to praise and blame, more docile to the workings of grace, we may rest satisfied that our Communion is good. If you are doubtful whether all this is so in your case, consult some spiritual adviser.



ground, and is simply imaginary. Conscience bears no special witness against you; you have not been guilty of any deliberate negligence, and yet you are troubled, and afraid, lest, in S. Paul's words, you "eat and drink damnation" to yourself.¹ But you must put such fearfulness aside with a steady hand and go trustfully to the Altar of God, and you will find that such fears will pass away with your Communion. Another time Satan whispers that you gain nothing from receiving the Blessed Sacrament; especially if you are being weaned from sensible affections to Holy Communion. This temptation may be met simply by obedience, and a desire to communicate in order to please God, and yourself. Again, to some the devil suggests thoughts of impurity, or unbelief at the very moment they are about to communicate—may be even a doubt in the Real Presence of Christ Himself; thus distracting the soul, so that it loses all self-control; or sometimes he disturbs the senses and imagination in some manner. Now, all masters in the sky

¹ 1 Cor. xi. 29.

to the Altar than to drive us to it. His object is manifest—to deter us from Communion, and if we are so deterred, he succeeds in his object. If we do not conquer.

Some will say, "But what if I receive unworthily?" If you are advised to receive, you had better do so. If you draw back from Communion even when the devil tries to persuade you that you are not fit, you will end by never receiving at all, and he will attain his object. Holy Communion binds us to Christ, and the effect upon you will vary according to your condition and need. It may bring peace, or you may be seemingly comforted, or you may be seemingly comforted, as you know your own heart.

The Cross of Christ

"I DETERMINED," says S. F. to know anything among Jesus Christ and Him Crucified." the substance of a Christian's faith. In the Cross we learn all of sin, the intensity of our weakness, the greater intensity of God's Mercy. the all-prevailing witness of God's Love, the most powerful attraction to man's heart, the richest source of all graces are to be found therein, and the perfection of the interior life. The Cross is the substance of our faith. It sets before us the

up to God. Every precept
Lord has given us may be
doctrine of the Cross.
power of sin, inasmuch as
the death of God made Man
power, and atone for sin
our weakness, for what
have brought had Christ no
our Propitiation?—the in
Mercy—for “if He spare
shall He not also freely give
Can we meditate on these
the only return God asks
should love, serve, and obey
count His yoke a burden
ments grievous, and Christ
Cross before their eyes, the
sins of which heathens mi
Men even mock at the Cross

The Cross of Christ

plex and harass our daily life. What a they to the Humiliation and Sufferings of our Incarnate Lord?

The Cross is the perfection of all interior life. There we see Christ both Priest and Victim, voluntarily offering Himself to the Glory and Justice of His Father, and though but few of us are called to His Likeness, who seek the interior life must be fashioned according to it, and when the discipline seems more than they can bear, let them look up to the Cross, and take fresh courage.

Be sure that there is no book like the Crucifixion—wherein not your eyes only read, but your heart. Ask Jesus to be your Teacher therein, to unfold its manifold secrets, that you may not merely gaze thereon but live thereby. Seek the interior life—total unreserved self-devotion to God's Will—accept every sacrifice He may require, and let Him to take forcibly what you have not the courage or strength to give Him. "If I

is it to take up the Cross? and is it in
as heavy a burden as the natural man is
to believe? First of all, taking up the C
involves a diligent avoiding of sin, and c
occasions of sin. This sounds only re
able, but it is no easy matter. Sin is
attractive and convenient; it is some
attended with temporal advantages; w
frequently, it may be daily, exposed t
temptations, which are often urgent
delusive. No Christian can withstand
without vigorous and stedfast exert
Next, taking up the Cross consists in
tifying passions, restraining desires, subje
the flesh to the spirit, watching over
senses, and all those feelings and ima
tions which influence the heart; for the
is a source whence evil springs—we t
ourselves to sin, and every earnest

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But now let us examine whether the Cross is really so heavy a burden as the natural heart of man is ready to believe it to be? One might well assert that there is no true happiness where the Cross is not, and that he who is lost has more to endure than he who is saved; that the wicked suffer hopelessly, miserably, and that even from this low ground the Cross is a blessing. But not to dwell on this general view, let us pass to details. If it is often hard work to avoid all occasions of sin, does conscience suffer nothing when we neglect to make such efforts? and do we not pay a heavy price for every indulgence in what we know to be wrong? Is there no gain in a peaceful heart which *cleaves to God in temptation*? Are not our *passions so many hard tyrants, which give no rest to their slaves*; and do they not

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God Only

THE whole spirit of the inter summed up in the words "God." The first step therein is devotion to Him—all progress in it is detachment of whatever is not Him, and its end is union with Him. None save those to whom this blessed union is given can know its sweetness, but we can all study the way whereby it is attained, and the preparation necessary to its attainment, for it is a path which every soul must learn for itself. God alone can lead us to this union, we cannot

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Should God even withd
the soul, it is doubtless
if He Himself vouchsaf
what more need we asl
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Only. None, save He
us, and unite us to Hims
wants and capacities of e
Him work as He will, v
guidance patiently and fi
If you ask what you m
is but one answer, All sa
much as none of us ca
this renunciation, we r
to teach us the lesson,

magnation...
very alarming colours, human ~~reason~~
us that it is unattainable; but ~~turn~~
ross in faith, meditate upon Christ's
and you will gain a truer notion of
lf-renunciation means. Ask Him to
a light, and to teach you the meaning
wondrous words, "It is finished"—
er, into Thy Hands I commend My
Ask Him to make known to you
was He did when He gave His Soul
ation of your sin. Before such truths
ation and reason will melt away, and
lone abide. But do not be presump-
Remember Who it was that said,
her, if it be possible, let this cup pass
Me." If for our sakes the Son of God
safed to endure such shrinking from the
ice He had come on earth to make,
need His Grace to tread

J always to pray, and not to faint ;" and S. Paul bids us "pray without ceasing." What is meant thereby, and how can we fulfil the precept? Obviously vocal prayer is not intended: that must have definite limits, and so must the actual practice of mental prayer. Neither can the mind be continually occupied with direct thoughts of God and of spiritual matters. Human intelligence could not achieve an unbroken attention to God's Presence, even were such a mental process compatible with due attention to the duties of life. But then how are we to fulfil our Lord's injunction? By the heart's prayer, which consists in a constant habitual love of God, trusting Him, submitting in all things to His Will ; and by giving a never-failing heed to His Voice, as heard within the conscience. This is how His Saints have prayed "without ceasing," and this it is which forms what we call the Interior Life.

IT OF GOD.

sure to you, tolerate nothing adverse continually striving to please Him; take all He sends patiently; resist only never to commit the smallest delinquency, and if unhappily you are overtaken by sin, humble yourself and rise up speedily; thus you will indeed "pray without ceasing," for each prayer will go on amid all your occupations and pursuits, even amid your amusements. It is neither impossible nor difficult. You will not always be thinking formally of God, but all your thoughts will be ruled by Him; His presence will check useless or evil thoughts, and will not make perpetual acts of rebellion; but your heart will be perpetually

Although such contin-
difficult, it is rare, because so
to persevere. Nor can it be
giving yourself wholly to
souls give themselves unres-
there are so many secret hind-
way by self-love. But once
freely to Him, and He will fort-
Himself, He will dwell in you
kindle that spirit of prayer wh-
you to be calm and recollected
daily duties. At first, you will
of this recollection, and rejoy-
after a time it becomes purely
you cannot renew the consci-
existence without foster-
do not sur-

from the Devil. Be
what He is doing, and trust yourself to
Be steadfast in shunning creature consolation
give not way to dissipating thoughts, and
you are called to give up even the most
innocent pleasures of life, do so willingly.
By degrees you will feel that God is
supreme in you; He will train you in the
of silence and solitude, He will wean
from the world and its interests, purify
senses, and fill you with His sanctified
grace. As you cease to be conscious
praying always, you will be more dependent
even from spiritual consolations, you will
more to all love of self, you will grow
simplicity and in nearness to God.
He will train you to offer yourself bravely
ever interior or exterior crosses He
—even temptation, desolation and
loss of Himself, if such be His Holy will.
And through this mystical death,
bring you forth to a joyful spiritual
in this life has a

Iso essential as this ; without it, the soul is powerless, with it, we can do all things. Confidence in God is beset by two enemies, both of which must be guarded against ; on the one hand presumption, cowardice on the other. Presumption raises a false conception of the Mercy of God, and leads to its abuse, or to slackness in our efforts to attain perfection. It is wont to say that God will not heed little things, or exact an over-strict account. Cowardice is so beset with the terror of God's judgments, that it loses sight of His Mercy, and often verges on despair. Both extremes arise from self-love and distorted views : the true course is to trust wholly in God, neither presuming nor desponding, but this true course can only be attained by those who give themselves sincerely to God. As a general rule, men are most liable to err on the side of presu

us, or
ess to receive and long
anner, His longing desire to reach
wandering sheep. Who can retrace his own
past life and not see the abundant signs of
God's Mercy which have visited him? the
occasions of sin averted or overruled, His
long-suffering when we fell, His manifold
gifts and graces whereby we have been led
and upheld, through which alone we have
been preserved hitherto? Recall all the
individual graces which you have received,
and be sure that those of which you are un-
conscious are tenfold in number. On the
other hand, the more we know of ourselves the
more cause we shall find to put all our trust
in God. Of myself I can do absolutely
nothing as regards my supernatural life; I
am not merely weak, I am powerless. I can
misuse my liberty to lose my soul, but I can-
not save it through my own free-will; I need
the stay of God's never-failing Grace, and
I know will be granted to trustful prayer.

When I fall I cannot arise, save by the help of God's Hand, but I know that It will stretch forth the moment that I claim help. I cannot count on the strength of my own intentions, or resolutions, or promises; still less can I dare alone to face the dangers and temptations which beset a Christian life. In short, the whole work of my salvation, from first to last, depends upon God. He can prosper it, and in spite of all my weakness and perversity, He will bring it to a safe end, if I do but cleave stedfastly to Him. The more humble a man is, the stronger his confidence in God will be, and a confidence grounded on humility will never be presumptuous. But neither will that be a cowardly confidence which is built on a certainty of His Infinite Goodness and Love. Who can be afraid while stayed upon his God? "Cast yourself freely into His Arms," says S. Augustine, "and never fear that He will let you fall." What foe can touch us, what temptation can soil us within those Everlasting Arms.

can insist to this

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overcome the world;" and as our
overcame it in His Own Blessed
He will overcome it in yours. Th
not a greater difficulty to us than
the Saints who have trodden its w
before us; and they had no more
of themselves than we have: their
was all of God, and by His Grace
be strong as they. Do you fear the
of the Devil? He becomes powerl
the presence of humble confidence in
If you do not presume upon your
strength, but look solely to God, all
powers of hell cannot prevail agai
Do you feel painful
everything

more heavenly you grow, and
the more God will uphold you
courage and your strength will
portion as you lose sight of self.
Aid you will triumph over all
devil, self-love. "Perfect love
all fear," save only the fear
God, or of refusing aught He

How we must Love

STRANGE that it should urge man to love God, his End, the Source of ever enjoys ! One would have thought interest alone was enough to kindle love. "Thou biddest me love Thee," exclaims S. Augustine, "as the greatest misfortune that can befall man is not to fail in loving Thee !" Now is the first and chiefest precept of the Law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy strength, and all thy mind."

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ch love will raise
e, human respect, worldly
He who will lose his life shall find it.
You must "love Him with all your strength;
without measure or limit, ever seeking
grow in that love, through prayer, by
means of grace, by good works, suffering
or whatsoever may be appointed for you.
Now, many well-meaning persons are greatly
troubled to know whether they really
God thus heartily? Such persons may
comfort from the thought that this very anxiety
is a sure proof that they do love Him, that
as such trouble and anxiety may become
sive through self-love, it may be well to
mit the question to a spiritual physician
then to abstain from perpetually re-considering

to our hurt. A
ommunion is apt to seek itself re
But if you are earnest in strivi
endure for God's Sake, if you
temptation, dryness, wearines
tion, you may rest assured that
real. As men advance in the
they learn to indulge less and
dissection, even as regards their l
—they are content to give them
Him in this matter as in all el
Him without any conscious dwe
their love; and this is the higher
form of love. It is free from al
placency, absorbed in God Him
“life is hid with Christ in God”
self-inspection would

dled it will never die out of
rather burn up all that is earth
within us, till having consum
absorb us into its own heat.

Rest in God

"Come to Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—MATT. xi. 28.

WHO but would test this gracious promise? Who is altogether free from the heavy load of pain, either bodily, mental or spiritual? Yet how many spend half their lives in vainly seeking rest? If ever there was a question which it concerns us all to answer it is this, Where is Rest to be found?

The larger part of mankind seek it in wealth, in honours, in worldly ease; but they do not find it. Covetousness, greed, envy, fraud, conspire to spoil all thought of rest in the good things of this world. Other

Christians attain to a full, steadfast, unchanging peace—they do not seek rest in (only, or give themselves up to Him with reserve. True rest is as unchanging as (Himself—like Him it rises above all earthly things: it is secret, abundant, without regret or a wish. It stills all passion, strains the imagination, steadies the mind, controls all wavering: it endures alike the “time of tribulation and the time of wealth;” in temptation and trial, as the world shines brightly on us. Many confessors, and saints have tasted this and “counted themselves happy in that endured.” A countless host of God’s faithful servants have drunk deeply of it and

rest coming over you. What once fretted you ceases to do so; former unworthy exciting pleasures cease to attract you. No miser ever so feared to lose his treasure as the faithful soul fears to lose this rest when once tasted. Such words may seem exaggeration to those who have not tried it; but the Saints will tell you otherwise. S. Paul will tell you of a "peace which passeth understanding;" Jesus Christ tells you of His Peace, which the world can neither give nor take away, because it is God's Gift only. Such peace may undergo many an assault, but it will but be confirmed thereby, and rise above all that would trouble it. He who has tasted it would not give it in exchange for all this life can give; and death is to him a

The Soul's Li

"Seek ye after God, and your so
Ps. lxix. 33.

HEREIN lies the root of all happiness. H soul's life ; without happiness thereof, life seems not worth is this happiness, and how is Holy Scripture tells us, in C "our life is hid with Christ as the body becomes a prey when its union with the soul the soul depends for life upon God ; yet not after a wholly ner. The body contains an

rest is not to be found in the things ;
“the Spirit giveth life,” and it also
until the soul drinks, and drinks of
the Spirit of God, it will not find
life. He kindles the burning thirst
leads us to the fountain of living water.
He has promised to satisfy it abundantly,
but He will have us ask before He gives.
To that end He has taught us to use the
blessed force of prayer. The soul can
die, in the sense of ceasing to exist, but
death consists in ceasing to know or love
God ; and weary indeed is that man’s
who has turned away from these saving truths
—to him all is restlessness and anxiety, frus-
trating desires, unfulfilled hopes—no peace, no
light, no satisfaction. But he who has found
his soul’s life in God is happy—not in truth
with perfect happiness ; that is not granted
to men in this world, but a foretaste thereof
—he has a secret joy which is beyond the
reach of temptation, unrest and sorrow.
quiet confidence and steadfastness—
even while the

low and lifteth up ;"¹ but wh
 eth in us," in our senses a
 human spirit and will, it is '
 Jesus might be made mani
 life of love, of glory, of perfe
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¹ 1 Sam. ii. 6, 7.

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The Soul's Peace

*"Great is the peace that they have who
law."—Ps. cxix. 165.*

THIS peace will not be won by literal obedience ; God's law must be loved as well as obeyed ; there must be a filial spirit as well as the legal duty : Those who obey God's law only because they fear His judgments, cannot look for the flowing peace and joy which are the fruit of a loving service ; a service which is performed heartily that His "yoke is easy, His burden is light," and which aims at promoting His Glory rather than any reward. Not a spirit in any way ignorant of the hope of

rules which may help
work.


And, first, enjoy su
gift of health, withou
into it. If you were
your pulse to see whetl
you would probably e
ill ; and it is equally
gauging the soul's pea
fuse real peace with wi
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severe illness, we are a
returning strength, and
health, we do not notic
us. Next, try to act
thinking overmuch abo
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hensions, are not of God. When
soul to fear that it has sinned, i
with a clear definite reproach ;—
learn to despise and set aside
dissections. Again, bear in mind
never casts the soul into trouble a
when it is truly seeking Him.

He rebukes, but He never trouble
He enables you to see your fault
and make amends, but it is all d
—restlessness and anxiety are t
work, and to be withstood. Mor
a most important point never to c
spiritual course because of any suc
prayer, Communion, all your dev
ercises must be persevered in, an
ere long conquer Satan and reg
Another great help in the att
peace, setting aside as that does th
of self-love, is to follow the advi
spiritual guide. Above all, beware

of the spirit of ~~unbelief~~


progress. Do not deceive
belief that such disquiet is
humble soul accepts its fate
and goes on afresh in con



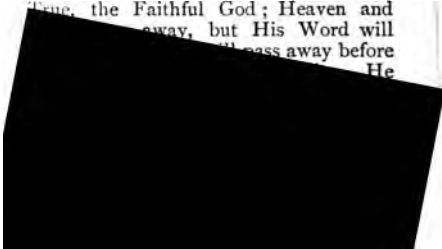
The Spirit of

“THE just shall live.
Paul is not speaki
dogmatic faith, but of that
personal, and which special
Providence over the souls I
souls He inspires with perf
Word and promise, and th
strength of that trust, by v
tests, through which it is the
stedfast, undoubting, “hopi
as S. Paul says. Holy Sc
examples of such faith. “I
I have believed.”

Bodily sufferings, spiritual
humiliation, the Cross in i



fears such a spirit of faith before all
knowing that where it is found he can
prevail ; and he spares no pains to
mine it by every conceivable assault of
doubt, intellectual pride, or ignorance ;
counting those who act under its influence
hypocrisy, folly, extravagance, what not !
It is ours to combat him by ever renewed
faith, by repeating the very acts from which
he would turn us. Our God is the Mighty,
True, the Faithful God ; Heaven and
Earth will pass away, but His Word will
remain. All will pass away before
Him. He



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Love for our Neigh

*"A new commandment I give unto
one another, as I have loved you."*

MUTUAL love had been since the world began our Lord call it a new commandment He gave an altogether new commandment the ancient law when He bade Example as the measure of the proof that they were His true that because His Love was bound to the death of the Cross. great Love. He has bound all

brethren, always to be ready to
forbear. If Christians really
their Saviour's precept, we s
quarrels, no scandal given or t
pathies, no harsh judgments, n
or words. Yet, practically, we
little of this true spirit of chari
then themselves. Self-love is
all evil, and not less destructiv
of man than of God. It con
within themselves and their ow
that they look upon their neig
ests, temporal and spiritual, as
until estrangement, envy and j
power better influences, and it
that a brother's spiritual progr
upon grudgingly as though it w
to our credit and appearance
All extreme sensitiveness, fastid

involves a constant mortification of the
own mind and will, a constant turning
thereof to the Mind of Christ. The
of sinning against perfect charity al-
ways arising in one shape or other,
are not watchful, self-love will es-
sentially ever-increasing hold upon your heart
ceptibly misleading your judgment,
and your affections. Thus many very
people betray a great deal of harsh-
ness and want of charity in judging their neigh-
bors, and you may be sure that the source
of these affections is love and a lack of interior life ; these
affections are of such a subtle nature that
they cannot be seen save by the help of a
supernatural light ; very trifles in appearance
need no small effort if we would deal
justly with them, and great self-renunciation
is sometimes involved in seemingly trivial
things. It may sound strange, but I believe that
it is harder to love our neighbor
than to love God.

Those, however, who are sincere live an interior life, and to be led by God's Grace, will escape many illusions of self-love. They are listening to God's Voice within and striving by His guidance to constant preference to what promotes their welfare rather than to their own. The will not fail to make itself heard is any danger of a breach of the love ; no unkind word, not even a froward smile or gesture, escapes God. He will show His servants where they have sinned ; He will check their uncharitable judgments, suspicions and imputations ; He will root out all dislikes and aversions, and teach them not to take offence, all resentment and bitterness from the heart will be brought up to His guidance. He

The World

EVERY one who seeks to give himself to God, and to attain everlasting life, is deeply concerned in the questions, What is the world? and How far does it concern a Christian?

Holy Scripture answers the first question. It is the "enemy of Christ."

The world consists of those men who look for happiness in the things of sense, and dread poverty, suffering, humiliation, as the real evils of life, which are to be averted at any cost, while they seek riches, honours, and pleasures with corresponding energy; unscrupulous as to the means by which such things are attained, regardless of ot

hateth you." The world is not of the Spirit of truth," and those who came were not to be "of the the earliest days of the Church, distinguish between those who out of the world by Christ. persecution were tests which n plain, but since Christianity through civilised nations, a wo amid Christians which, in spite profession of a higher law, yet carry on most of the vices of id teach a code in all things the to the Gospel of Christ.

That nominal profession of however, makes it hard to disce the world disguises its counsel pagates its doctrine insidiously, great pretence of reconciling

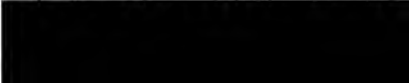
worldliness and wrong, which are more apparent and unquestionable. But in truth there is but one course to be taken by those who while yet in the world, would be "kept from the evil;" it is that of which S. Paul says "the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."¹ Crucifixion was the portion of slaves when the Apostle wrote these words, and assuredly he meant to imply that the world was an object of contempt, of loathing,—an accursed thing, with which he would have no dealings, no intercourse. The world has insulted, outraged, crucified Jesus Christ,—renews its insults daily yet—how can the disciples do otherwise than hate and renounce the Master's enemy? The first act of a Christian life is a solemn renunciation of the world. In Holy Baptism, it is the essential condition on which we are admitted into Christ's Church. Do you often call this promise to mind, and the obligations it involves? There is no middle course; the world has its law, its doctrine, its course,—Christ's law and doctrine and way are the very opposite; they are irreconcilable enemies. You cannot halt between the two opinions, or remain neutral. If you follow Christ and His Cross, the world will disown you. if you follow the world

your time of probation, but He would not have you lean upon them, or seek all your rest therein ; if you should do so, He will assuredly turn them into bitterness, and that for your own gain. You will also weigh in a just balance all the things after which the world runs most eagerly—the advantages of rank, honour, man's esteem. Are they worth so much as you may have been tempted to think ? or is there good reason why you should pride yourself on their possession ? Again, as to physical and intellectual advantages ; are you more precious in God's Sight because of them ? and if not, ought you to hold yourself as better than others who have them not ? Is there any reason to take credit to yourself *for personal beauty, or mental capacity ?* *Still less can wealth, position, and their attendant circumstances, be subjects of pride*

The World

to a Christian, while health and life itself are only precious in so far as they are used to God's Glory. So the praise of man cannot influence your future happiness, save in so far as it may hinder you by exciting vanity and self-satisfaction. What then are all the things which we so eagerly seek after worth? If God only is worthy of our love, that which He loves can alone be worth our search, and we know from our Saviour's own lips that "that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the Sight of God." He measures all things by the standard of Eternity; men by that of the world and its passing gains. He esteems the Cross, trial, suffering, humiliation, all that detaches us from this life, and raises us to Himself; not to cleave to all that makes life smooth and pleasant, while it veils the heavenly horizon. Which is the safest course, which the path to true happiness?

If, then, you would follow the Saints who



of manhood is, and it is through I
ture alone that man appears great-
of his approach to God ; all hu
sophy sets forward nought save tl
of human nature, because God
Beginning, Centre, the End there

Learn to tread under pride ;
self-conceit and earthliness, and
attain to a dignity of which you li
to be capable. "It doth not
what we shall be, but we know
He shall appear, we shall be lik
we shall see Him as He is." ¹

¹ 1 John iii. 2.

The Human Heart

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?"—JER. xvii.

BY "the heart" we must understand the hidden depth of evil, perversity and self-love, which is in us all, and which affects even our best actions more or less; for we are that knows himself ever so little but is conscious how self-love tarnishes and hinders almost all he does? This is a consequence of original sin, which diverted what would have been our natural leaning to God, and turned the stream of our affections upon self. Do honestly with yourself, and you will see it.

that it is of the very essence of this evil to find us to ourselves;—we see the faults of others plainly enough, but not our own. We are vexed with those who point them out to us, we refuse to acknowledge them. Too often, when roused to consciousness of what is wrong in us, we are rather irritated than humbled by that which is humiliating to our pride, that is humbled by realising the truth. Our greatest defect is to disguise our own heart both as to ourselves and others. With the latter we do not always succeed, they are quicker to perceive our faults; but unhappily we are too successful in evading that self-knowledge which is so specially necessary to the Christian, yet so rare, so seldom honestly sought. Men live and die without having ever tried to fathom their own hearts—rather tried all along to deceive them-

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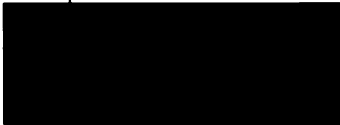
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Temptation

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation"
JAMES i. 12.

IT is easy to realise God's Hand and protecting the soul, and smooth and comforting; when fills the heart, and neither devil nor turb it. But when God withdraws consolations, and suffers His servant by temptation and assault, it is hard to believe that His Hand is still over him, and such an one is tempted to ask what he has done to be thus chastised. It is an Apostle who tells us that he who endures temptation, and Raphael is said to have told Tobit



...when he compared
athletes' contest, saying, "Now th
to attain a corruptible crown, but w
corruptible." Untried virtue can
deserve the name.

To prove, is to purify: as met
proved and purified in the crucible
man's heart proved in the furnace of af
—the selfishness, the pride which tan
are purged away; and without some
process there can be none of that purit
heavenliness which follow upon temp
endured. Purity, faith, trust, com
with fresh beauty from the pressure c

H. L.

respect and self-conceit—all temptation to detachment, humility, union with. Who then will be afraid? If it savour much of spiritual pride to desire the least we need not fear them, or give way to despair at their approach. If you say you fear to yield under them, I would ask are you not rather shrinking from that glorious defence, which is to win the "crown of life" promised to him who endures temptation?¹ "Yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully;" S. Paul says.² Such comes because you are looking at the matter as though it were to be fought in your strength, not in that of God. By your own strength, you would be soon overthrown with the Everlasting Arms around you, is there to fear? Can men or devils tear from out their shelter? And He has promised to succour you in the temptation which He sends, and into which you are thrust by self-will. "God is faithful.

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sit in judgment upon the worth of our own Communion. Again, the devil persuades another man that his prayers and meditations are waste of time, because he is harassed with distractions, and has no conscious sweetness in them. But this is mere delusion. No prayer so tends to stifle self-love as that which is dry and even painful. Another common form of temptation sets before us some course of action different to that which God appoints to us. He leads us into silence and retreat, and we persist in rushing into a busy outer life, under the excuse of zeal, good works, and our neighbour's edification. Or we are tempted to doubt the wisdom of any spiritual advice which may be given us when it does not tally with our inclination.

Souls that have made further progress in the interior life meet with a different class of

Temp

temptations, which in character of trial than of punishment, God allows them to be by violent assaults of Satan on their faith, hope, love and patience. They may mistakenly imagine that yielding under the pressure may be of great advantage to your spiritual condition. Be true with whomsoever you are, allowing fear or shame to rule from him ; and then without any questioning or scruple, it is well not to resist, or attempt to prevail, but rather to rest quietly, trusting wholly in His assistance. The only temptation is unfailing Grace, and heartiness for, after all, the devil comes from our self-love. When temptation comes, let it be like a storm cloud while you

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Self

GOD Alone can speak of Himself as independent existence, the centre and standard of all things, for He Alone IS ; all else is His creation, the work of His Hands, helpless and worthless in itself. Once accepted this principle, and it is easy to feel the unlawfulness of any human self-assertion. Men are wont to weigh themselves, to love and esteem, prize themselves, to lay claim to the love and esteem of others ; looking at everything from their own point of view, making their own interest the centre round which everything they do works. They seek self on all sides, as though all creation was destined


would be then some eyes that
would surround us.

There are two shapes assumed by
one is gross and material, the self of
men, who are for ever in pursuit of
gain, and of those who, misled by
sive intellectual pride, affect to be
to common prejudices, and make a
their own reason. Nearly all the vice
degrade mankind and afflict the w
the offspring of this grosser self.

But there is another more spiri
which is peculiar to religious people,
of which it would not be easy to d
how it blights and withers devotion,
and misdirecting it, and bringing
into contempt and ill-repute. Who
all the meanness, the weakness, the
which it leads; how it fills pious pec
and makes them

turns aside, how many good works it poisons; how many faults it disguises till we mistake them for virtues.

The spirit of self, whether it take material or a moral shape, has ever the same result, that of utterly blinding us. We fancy that we see and know ourselves truly, but nothing can be a greater delusion; we will not let our eyes be opened, and are vexed with those who attempt the task. All suggestions and remonstrances are attributed either to unkindness or error; however justly fault is found, wounded self-love is irritable and intolerant of the slightest touch. On the same principle we feel perfectly competent to decide everything for ourselves, and even those whose office it is to advise. Self-love thinks no guide wise who will not soothe and flatter it; and he who asks of the submission of our own opinion and withstands a chance of being forsaken as depriving the conscience of liberty. Tell us, what



WHILE WE STAY IN ALL THINGS TO WORK TOGETHER
with Him.

My chief enemy, the enemy through whom all other foes, the world and the devil, reach me, is myself, the "old man," the "old Adam" of which S. Paul speaks : that self-love which was born with me grew faster than my mental growth, and has been strengthened by my passions, by my natural want of perception, the weakness of my will, the abuse I have made of my freedom, my bad habits and sins. How am I to resist this terrible foe? Where am I to begin? My very efforts to overcome it seem to give it new strength ; self-love finds food in everything it contemplates, and admires itself in every attempt I make to conquer a fault or acquire a virtue ; *it drinks up the praise bestowed upon me, it*

ush, destroy it in me, or I can n
e victory. Blessed and All-power
give myself up to Thee, deal with
hou wilt. Overrule all my resist
by chastening Hand, punish me
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mplacency and self-satisfaction, ex
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ee. Leave me not, my gracious S
til the old Adam be rooted out, a
w Adam, even Thyself, and Thir
ckening Spirit, take sole possession
that I may be brought to that Hon
st which Thou hast prepared for
t love Thee. Amen.

The Nothingness of Man

"Fine age is even as nothing in respect of Thee."—
Ps. xxxix. 6.

WE are not always willing to accept the doctrine of our own nothingness, or the necessity of a death unto self; and yet it is a true doctrine, and not really harsh as we may suppose. When God requires such humiliation of self, He only exacts that which is His due, He would only have us realise our true position. Had the taint of original sin never fallen upon man, were we still pure and innocent, we could still be nothing of ourselves; our very existence is a gift of God, still more all else we possess, and it is our arrogance to murmur at our own nothingness.

Some will say that it is easy enough to admit our nothingness with respect to God, but less so with respect to men, who are no

it, to give Him that which is His due, to Him exercise His rights over us, body and soul, it is not so easy, although He deals ever so gently with our weakness, and never takes us at unawares when He proves and tries us. As regards men, I grant that they have no inherent right over us, and that their contempt and oppression is an injustice; but we have not any more reason to mourn because of that, inasmuch as being ourselves naught, we have no right to anything, and the injustice is done to God, whose law is infringed by those who oppress or despise. The injury is done to Him, not to me, and I may not retaliate or give way to a revenge spirit. If we could always keep this truth in view, there would be fewer heart-burnings and animosities among us, but the end lies in dwelling upon our own supposed rights which we indulge, while we forget God's right is the source of untold evil. Doubtless, it is difficult to follow out this course, but it is possible. God never exacts what is impossible of us, and He would have us act by

badly.

The chief pang of most trials is not so much the actual suffering itself, as our inherent spirit of resistance to it. But a soul which accepts its own nothingness is free from all resistance, and nothing can disturb its peace—the habit of self-renunciation strengthens continually, and we are astonished to find ourselves bearing that which once seemed intolerable, calmly and patiently. It is pride which makes contempt, or censure, or other humiliations, so hard to bear; we would not be esteemed, well thought of, considered, respected, and when such considerations are denied us, we are excited and irritated. But when we can triumph over pride, throw away self-esteem, and take all trifling mortifications with an interior spirit of humility, we shall cease to care much what is said or thought of us, or even how we are treated. A dead man has no sensitiveness as to praise or blame. *A soul which is dead to self shares in the stillness and deep repose*

Since we are far from indifference or sweetness, we cannot escape a seeming estrangement from God, and thus arise discouragement alarms. But it does not follow that we are really amiss with us because He does not give us sensible consolations. A true spiritual renunciation, which seeks to serve God Himself Alone, will bear with all discontent to know that He accepts our prayers and is convinced that we deserve no more. True peace lies in forgetfulness of self and can only be found in God. Once gained, and neither earth nor hell will perturb you, or disturb your peace, and His Holy Spirit will dwell in you.

stedfast perseverance, needs a large supply of this grace to meet the perpetual sacrifices which it involves ; and you may observe that all those who bear the stamp of God's Saints are to be distinguished by an elevated tone which is not of this world, as well as by a special sensitiveness to the sorrows of others. A high tone of feeling, and a tender heart, are the sources whence generosity springs, and no grovelling soul, which is indifferent to a brother's woe, can attain to it, or really give God that " offering of a free spirit " which is so precious in His Sight. Still, though natural generosity has a direct tendency to that which is supernatural, they are by no means one and the same. *Earthly generosity consists in sharing what we possess with others ; spiritual generosity implies giving to*

Generosity

God, not only all we have, but all that we are ; it implies the sacrifice of mind, of health, reputation, life, in short, of all that constitutes that subtle self in which our natural affections are centred. S. Gregory says that it is easy to give up what a man has, but very hard to give up himself ; and in truth it cannot be done save through the grace of God. We are tempted to think that we have achieved the work, when in our first fervours we have given ourselves heartily to God, and made strong protestations of our readiness to bear all things for love of Him. Yet this is but the first step, and the real sacrifice is altogether another matter.

When God leads the soul into the path of true sacrifice, He generally withdraws sensible consolations, and permits repugnance, revulsion, a general rising of self-love, to try it. At such a time we are apt to experience a vehement opposition within ourselves to God's Will, and the interior struggle is often a very agony—we cry out for deliverance from us—the whole of our nature seems to be at odds with that destination which God has marked out for us.

life.

There is always some taint of self in mere natural generosity—interested motives, pride and vanity intrude, a love of patronising, the praise of men, or even our own conscious self-applause find a part therein. But none of these can reach supernatural generosity—self-love can find nothing to feed upon in that, the very aim of which is its destruction. Our own interests are sacrificed to those of God; our victories are too hardly won to excite any vanity—interior and exterior humiliations avert human praise, and the pride which attends it; all is for God, and Him Only. So when He demands some great sacrifice of His child, He supplies a proportionate generosity of spirit, kindling and exalting the soul till it is filled with a boundless desire for self-devotion, and in the presence of His Grace weakness is made str

Generosity

He who once felt God's ordinary more His Counsels, hard to fulfil nothing hard. "I will run the w Commandments when Thou has heart at liberty." Where he stunted toiled wearily, when carrying an heart, he now runs freely and joyfully God's touch has enlarged and expanded heart.¹ Our progress in His service upon the heartiness with which we ourselves up to it; and what seems matter to a niggardly self-seeking soul as nothing to one who has lost self in But such a "free spirit" must be the result of constant prayer. Ask that you may measure your service by your own earthly notions. It is a marvellous thing in truth, to serve God, and we are powerless to do it save through His Grace. He takes away from us the spirit of self, and gives us His Own Spirit, before we can succeed. The less we live according to our own imaginations, the more we share in God. "His ways are not as our ways, His thoughts are not as our thoughts."

Simplicity

IT is not easy to define simplicity, and yet it is the source and fulfilment of God's perfections, and of all perfection in the interior life. God's Attributes are all stamped with it—Eternal without beginning and end, indivisible—HE IS. The more our souls can approach to such simplicity, the nearer they are to Him in Whose Image and likeness they were created; and the more all sinks before that one thing, Love of God, as the object of their single affection, intellect and will, the more the aim of all spiritual training, union with Him, is attained. A simple heart will love all that is most precious on earth, husband or wife, parent or child, brother or friend in God, without barring its singleness: external things will have no attraction save inasmuch as they lead souls to Him; all exaggeration, unreality,

Sin

God, and hence arise
what others will say
and actions are perceived
as in His Sight of
simplicity is the very
—God, His Will;

But the world
wickedness"—is

spies and rejects
It deals in dissimulating
seeking, earthly

life madness" which

and must be a contrast

the two. At the heart

it is of the very

simplicity to be

who are blessed

that attracts real

singular ways

holiness is in

others, but for

have them all

the shadow of

completely to

Obedience

OBEDIENCE costs the human a higher price than any other virtue. It is easier to bear fasts and austerities, to submit one's will to that of another, when no collision of principle or principle comes into direct collision with the essence of self-love, and with that which seems reasonable and justifiable. Should I not judge for myself according to my own lights, and only follow the lead of other men where it seems pleasant to do so? What can be more difficult than to submit to another's control of one's conduct, over the course of my spirit? It is a great sacrifice, but it is necessary to secure our heavenly life and our

should submit to those whom He has appointed as in things to us. "Obey them that have the authority, and submit yourselves, for they are your souls as they that must give an account that they may do it with joy, and that that is unprofitable for grief, for that is unprofitable for Those who would shake off this doing so offend God.

But, you reply, if I should consult a spiritual guide, why must I obey a man who fall into error himself, and mislead me? spiritual pastor to whom you submit is God's ambassador to lead you in the way of holiness, and if you obey him heartily God's Sake, you may trust that he will inspire you.

greater; wherever God sees y
aside, He sees you striving to full
and that is infinitely acceptab
Obedience strengthens the s
Satan's assaults. Our Dear Lo
"though He were a Son, yet lea
ence by the things which He
"and became obedient unto dea
He is our model, we need not sh
pride or self-sufficiency from tre
steps. Our obedience will alw
nitely short of His. From His
Death He never "pleased Hi
which of us can the like ever be

¹ Heb. v. 8.

² P

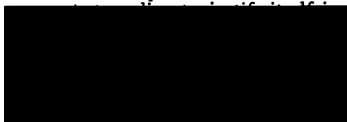


Humility

*"Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly,
and ye shall find rest unto your souls."
x. 29.*

MEELINESS is the result of true
ity. He who is lowly in heart
inevitably be meek, and he who is de
in meekness is sure to be deficient
humility. Never was there
hat of Jesus Christ
aking

less opinion of the world. The
break promises and resolution
made before God, in order to ap
thing which we are not, in the
—and too often we rather prid
upon our worldly wisdom, and th
of that love of humiliation w
chosen Saints have felt, but whi
from us. Real humility would ta
of any natural advantages, whe
intellect, beauty, wealth, or what
be. They are not our own worl
does not give such gifts to nourish
vanity. Of themselves they are no
to our salvation ;—it may be th
misuse we have turned them int
of sin, and far from glorying in the
they ought to deepen our humili
humility would hold itself unwor
praise of men, and would refer all s
while it would accept blame and
its natural portion ; even welcom



...manitish woman
gather up the crumbs which fall
Master's table. When God's In-
averted, it is ready to cry out
prophet, "I will bear the indignation
Lord, because I have sinned against
Whatever visitations come from God
true humility takes them as its due
asking strength to bear them; and
arise peace and blessing.

How can such humility be attained
entire self-abandonment in God's Hand
giving ourselves unreservedly to Him; His
work out His Will in us, and supply a
need to co-operate with Him. He will
with that deep, generous, restful
ble humility which
nners to

the Right Use of Time

A greater number of men use their time amiss; many others are perplexed as to it, or rather how to get rid of it; every object is to dispose of time as it may be. Such people are not very successful; a frivolous, idle use makes men weary of themselves and the habit of wasting time is more easily acquired than set right. Nevertheless a day will come when the use of this gift will be a matter of sore regret to all who have failed to use it as a gift from God, to be returned to Him with

any one aiming at an interior life is disposed to ask himself what time he regards himself? It is his present, his distance. Past time is nothing to him; he cannot recall it or alter its character.



On the Right Use of Time

tion of time on which we can reckon is the actually present—the actual moment in which we live, which itself passes away so rapidly that no earthly process of thought or power can stay it. All these are common-place truths, which every one knows, yet how few act upon them. Whence comes this actual moment of time and existence? It is God's gift; He gave you being, He has brought you hitherto through time, He gives you this minute now fleeting by; but neither you nor any other human being knows whether He will give you the next. But you must go on to ask, Why He has given you this gift of time? That you may attain a blessed eternity. Faith and reason alike tell you that your soul will live for ever, and God has filled your heart with a craving for immortality which will not be disappointed. But eternity may be happy or miserable, and that according to the use made here of time. If hitherto you have misused it, begin now to do differently, win the crown of life.

future blessing

; and sin is the work
Directly that your will
all is in peril, whether
sinful act or not, and if
while thus consenting to
but how can you be sure
not come while you are
on a road of a sinful thought?
untold importance those
in which it arises are?
as may be turned to good,
that of Christ's Gospel—there
for them so boundlessly as we
—sin is the only evil which
nity, and for which we cannot
a remedy, since repentance is
dy for sin, and that may not be
power. Such thoughts as these
guide you to resolve never to

... and ought to do
... which may never be given
to waste moments which are so
important in questionable or hurtful
actions; and to consider frequently
which has so weighty an object, and
may end at any moment, should be
used, given to God and the duties
position. Some such rules as these
to be followed by all who call them
Christians. But those who seek to live
interior life should do more; their time
no sense their own—it is God's only,
they must seek to rule every instant of
whether given to duty or to innocent
on, according to His direct
each a habit of life
they will

accepting all things at His Hand, love Him, not in mere formal adequate expressions, but with a continuous devotion which rests itself upon His Hands. This mental attitude of your soul's life—your external circumstances change, toil may take the place of ease, sickness of health, trials may thicken without. Externally, you are in such circumstances, but if your heart is on God, no changes or chances can separate you from Him, and all that may befall you will lead you closer to Him. In that respect your life is blended with eternity to you, whatever the present moment may be. Your knowledge that it is His Will for you, your future heavenly life will be made possible by it, will make all not only tolerable but welcome to you, while no victory is impossible.

The Blindness of Man

"For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind."—JOHN ix. 39.

OUR Lord spake these words in connection with the restoration of one blind from his birth, to whom He had given sight both bodily and spiritual; the Pharisees who were looking on, being unable to reach the mystery right. But the meaning of the Saviour's words reaches us all. We are born in the blindness of original sin, knowing neither God nor ourselves, wholly ignorant to the things which concern us most, to true happiness, and the way by which

to our own faults though clear-sighted
as to those of our neighbours'. The
is blinded thus does not and cannot
self ; but God's Light quickly open
which are not wilfully closed. T
wilful blindness, which refuses t
that it cannot see, and how sho
Divine Light avail those who say, "
and "whose sin remaineth?" H
penetrate those self-willed, obstina
which cling to their own prejudices
sist in seeing everything according to
light? Yet this blindness is by n
uncommon even in religious peopl
asmuch as it springs from pride,
cease with a persistency which not

of His Grace, and seek to be ho-
noured, and on these He sheds the fulne-
ss of His Blessed Light; there are others
who deny that they are blind, and persist in
remaining in darkness. It may be that
He ascribe the light He gives them to their
merits, and He punishes them by with-
drawing it; or they misuse and neglect that
light and will not walk by it, and it ceases to
illumine their eyes. To which of these classes do
we belong? Woe be to any of us who cleave
to his own light, and chooses his own path.
God will surely leave us to our own
guidance, and how shall we escape a
fall? Nor less great is the danger, if we mis-
use His light for our own, and feed presumption
and vanity thereby; or if we fail to use
the light God sends according to His Will.
If we reject it, He will take it from us,
and give it to those who will use it better. There
is but one safe course; to imitate the
man near Jericho, who cried out, "Jehovah
of David, have mercy on me." "What wilt
thou say?" "I am a blind man."

...owledge that see
s of foes, that God's Will
ush it, they would never rest till they
odden it down; they would rejoice to h
o independent being, but in all things
wait upon Him; to keep their hearts
ready to receive the inspirations of His G
Do not fear to see your own weakness
poverty by the Light of that Grace, i
show you your faults, and give you pow
conquer them. Do not seek to shatt
mirror which reflects your soul's l
beauty; rather welcome the truth
believe that, next to the knowledge
nothing is so precious as the know
1 "As every lovely hue is light,
So every light is Love,"

Augustine, "Lord, teach
me to know Thee, and to know myself ! "

¹ Psa. xlii. 9.

love, and the
t alone would
draw us down to
as to those which
e all through life,
ts of our bodies
n of higher aims;
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y men heed it not,
e who would fain
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...may imagine ourselves free
from our heavenward path ; but too c
least hindrance throws us back, some
earthly lure makes us forget all w
resolved, and we fall helplessly. We
we cry out with S. Paul, "The good
would I do not, but the evil which I w
not that I do."

Even that measure of "willing go
which we possess is the work of Grace o
ot any merit of our own,—passion i
clination are almost always on the wr
e ; our perversity frets against God
training Hand, and in many cases me
tain from sin rather out of fear of h
than that of God. Nay—
tive attraction of

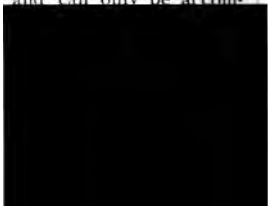
of that gracious promise, "My Grace is sufficient for thee, for My Strength is made perfect in weakness."¹ If the great Apostle was in danger of being "exalted above measure through the abundance of revelations," so that he needed "a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him," how much more such as we are?

¹ 2 Cor. xii. 9.

Detachment

A HOLY man of old summed up interior life in three words: Silence, Rest. Flight from all that would separate the soul from God ;—Silence, that it may hear His voice ;—Rest, that it may be united to Him. The things that are called to an interior life are not, as S. Arsenius, to a literal flight from the world, but they are called to “use the world ;”—to seek ever increasing union with God from it and from all that tends to separate them from God. At first there is no such great thing to demand of a religious man ; but it is harder and harder. He must not

advance in the spiritual life. Faulty in attaining true devotion from our natural inclination to be drawn into the things of this world, to seek a rest which they can never give. Then the influence of self-love, and our desire to be loved and well thought of, which leads us to love and do what they care for, to frame our words and actions upon theirs, till we sacrifice God's Law and that of nature to the artificial code of the world in every respect, and the dread of man prevents many a man from steadfastly adhering to the precepts as well as the maxims of God's law. It is hard to do this, and can only be accom-



Then as to silence ; it is a mistake to suppose that silence is a virtue appertaining solely to the cloister. It is more or less a necessity to all interior life, and when our Lord spoke of the account men must one day give for "every idle word," He assuredly did not limit the warning to the cloister's walls. An unrestrained flow of talk is a sure sign of a trifling, dissipated mind ; and no one can turn readily from useless, frivolous conversation to recollected prayer, or spiritual reading, so as to profit by them. But there is another kind of silence to be cultivated besides that of the tongue as regards others. I mean silence as regards one's self—restraining the imagination, not permitting it to dwell overmuch on what we have heard or said, not indulging in the phantasmagoria of picture-thoughts, whether of the past or future. How hard this is those only who have struggled with the difficulty know ! and yet how necessary it is, for how can we hope to hear God's Voice amid the invisible but less real whirl of mental disturbance which a mental habit of idleness creates ?

dwelling on them; you can put it
you can check the self-compla
irritation, or earthly longings: u
them, and by the practice of su
mortification you will attain the
inward silence which draws the s
close intercourse with God.

Further, you must find rest for
and heart in God, and there is no
rest. But it is not to be found by
or excitement, or hurry. You will
blessed rest in proportion as you
all agitation, all over-eagerness an
leaving God to work in you. He
active, but always at rest, and the
cleaves to Him will share His s
His rest alike. It will labour, but
as scarcely to be conscious of wha
it moves beneath the guiding Powe

self that you are so true, no less true, and the very essence is to lose one's self in God, which be while the soul is gauging at itself. "Father, into Thy Hand commend my spirit," may well be our as in all else. Do with me as Thine time and in eternity. "Whosoever his life shall lose it ; and whosoever his life for My Sake shall find it.

¹ Matt. xvi. 25.

“WHOSO despiseth small things shall fall by little things ;” and “he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much ; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.” Carelessness in trifles leads to grievous falls, and our faithfulness in small duties is a sure test of holiness in purpose and life. But when we speak thus, bear in mind that nothing is small or great in God’s Sight ; whatever He wills becomes great to us, however seemingly trifling, and if once the voice of conscience tells us that He requires anything of us, we have no right to measure its importance. On the other hand, whatever He would not have us do, however important we may think it, is as nought to us. There is no standard of things great and small to a Christian, save God’s Will.

...regarding this duty
think so trifling, or the blessing
of a faithful performance may bring
great opportunities of service
out rarely, whereas little things
of which usefulness is proved occur perpetually.
Do not wait for some great thing which
will give you love to God, you may perfect
your life. Besides, great undertakings
require great strength, and how can you
know that you are capable of any service
if you have not been trained and proved in
the lesser? Great works imply powerful
grace, but God does not bestow
extraordinary gifts of grace save to those
who have made good use of His lesser gifts.
God, in humility esteems all great things
little, and clings gladly to the lowly.

Be sure that if you do your duty
at which is laid


The
involved in a thing
than appears at first sight, and such
of their continual recurrence. Such
little things implies a perpetual mortification
of self, a ceaseless listening to the whispers
of grace, a strict watchfulness against every
thought, wish, word or act which can offend
God ever so little, a constant effort to do
everything as perfectly as possible. In truth,
it seems to me that he who attains to all this
has made some progress in holiness! Self is
always a very real danger in doing or bearing
great things for God; we are apt to admire
our own performances, to indulge self-com-
placency, to esteem ourselves above other
men. But little things involve no such risk,
self-love finds no pasture in them, and we are
not tempted to compare ourselves with others,

consequently we are far more likely to go on steadily, and make true progress in a holy life. Little things destroy self by a succession of tiny blows, which do more in their continual pressure than such as are sharper, but rarer ; and self-love had better be put to a slow, certain death, than merely scotched, to spring up again with tenacious life. In the beginnings of self-devotion, God sometimes deals some severe blows to self-love, but He generally extinguishes it by a slow, well-nigh invisible process.

Devoted earthly love thinks nothing too trifling, which can give pleasure or pain to the beloved one—and God's jealous, sensitive Love is surely not less than that of men. Who that loves can bear to cast a shadow on the loved face, or cause a sigh to pass his lips ? how much less can a loving heart grieve God in anything ? how can it bear to forego the tender returns of love He pours on those who are wholly His ? All this, however, must be done with a free, childlike spirit, without restlessness and anxiety. He does not ask a

the Made of our Faults

every important point in the life ; God intends even our trial and the sanctification of our souls with ourselves whether they be good or bad. Not unfrequently we suffer more from a fault itself, than from the consequences we deal with it. I am not alone in this ; many people who give themselves up to sin, and so commit numberless faults, which can in no way be accounted for. The souls to which this applies, who, in spite of all their resistance, are continually committing sin through impetuosity, weakness, or ignorance, such people are wont to be troubled and distressed at their faults ; to feel a false shame, and become hardened. But these are so selfish, more hurtful to the



infer from that, that your self-knowledge is small. Surely you might rather be astonished that you do not fall into more frequent and more grievous faults, and thank God for His upholding Grace. You are worried when you detect a fault, you lose your inward peace, and your disturbance lasts hours or days, as the case may be. This is not right. You should never allow yourself to be disturbed, but when fallen you should rise quietly, turn with a loving heart to God for forgiveness, and put away the thought of your fault until the proper time comes for self-accusation, then own to it frankly and fully, and do not afterwards be disturbed.

False shame is another besetting evil ; perhaps you are afraid fully to own all your faults to another. You are forever saying to yourself, "What will he think of me after all my promises and resolutions?" But if you own to everything, simply and humbly, you will not lose in the estimation of a true servant of Christ ; if he sees that it costs you a severe struggle, he may not improp-

altogether pride ; you are
yourself weaker, less holy than you fancie
yourself to be ; perhaps too your aim wa
self-satisfaction, you wanted to be able t
congratulate yourself on having spent a da
or a week free from faults. Then you grow
discouraged, you relax your devotions
exercises, and begin to look upon perfectio
as unattainable." "What is the use of suc
perpetual self-restraint and watchfulness?
you ask ; "What good does all my recolle
tion and mortification do me, if none of m
faults are corrected, and I grow no better
'This is neither more nor less than a snare
the devil, and if you would escape it, y
must resolve not to be disheartened, but e
if you were to fall a hundred times a d
determine to rise up each time, and go
What will it matter though
if you reach,

those who make the heartiest efforts for conquering self, and who are not afraid of stumble, even of a fall, so long as their progress is certain. S. Paul says that "all things work together for good to them that love God;" and we may be sure that even their faults are included. God permits them to cure our vain presumption, and to teach us our true measure. It was so with David.

"It is good for me that I have been in trouble, that I may learn Thy statutes."

Peter fell before he learnt to know his own weakness: S. Paul remained humble amid the triumphs granted to his eloquence; remembering that he had been "a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious," he proclaimed himself the "chief of sinners;" bearing "thorn in the flesh,"—all his days, "lest I should be exalted above measure." We can doubt that in like manner God will be to us to use our daily faults for greater sanctification? All the masters of the spiritual life have observed that God often permits the holiest men to retain certain defects, which they wholly overcome.

have arisen. Some outward cause, harshness, or impatience, leads you to humble yourself in reparation. This was sudden and not premeditated; reparation is deliberate and hearty, though it costs you no small effort. Hence it is more acceptable to God than the fault which displeases. Again, He sometimes shows real holiness under external imperfections which most readily meet the eye of your neighbour, so as to prevent the praise of you from tarnishing humility. God is a true Master of souls, be it ours to let Him go His way in us. By all means let it be your great object never to offend Him in anything, but when you have committed a fault, strive to be sorry, not for your mortal sin or pride, but because you have displeased Him. Accept all inevitable humiliation, ask (

are--

they make you cross and
are you to attain self-control, if
occasions of practising it? Is it
choosing a greater fault than the
you fear to fall? Aim at a steady
right, go wherever duty calls you
firmly that God is an indulgent
will forgive the faults which t
ness by surprise in spite of our
to please Him.

l and advice. Surely a good spiritual guide feels that his office is teaching his penitents how to avoid sin, as well as receiving the confession of sin already committed.

By spiritual guidance we mean leading a man in the paths of holiness, teaching a man to listen for God's Voice, and obey its call; suggesting the means best calculated for avoiding temptations, and for advancing towards perfection, in a word, guiding a man to God. This is what S. Gregorius meant when he called it "the art of arts." The guide must be God's instrument, the channel of the Holy Spirit's grace; *'Ars est artium regimen animarum.'*
r. i. 1.

attent solely on God's Gl
of souls ; lowly in his own
the things of God by the
Need I say, such men are r
those who seek guidance, it
little if they are not docile, c
hearted, straightforward, rea
can be asked of them for Go
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If good guides are rare, so
jects for guidance ! Too ma
be directed after our own fas
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the world.

He who really desires to c
God

presence. I have
found a suitable guide.
I be confirmed by experience in this
ion; were it to prove otherwise, God
make it plain. Having found a good
ellor, it is next no small matter to make
at use of him. The more interior you
the easier this will be. General rule
not of much use, but so much I would
let your intercourse concern spiritu
gs only, as far as may be, and let mutu
fect and seriousness prevail, ever reme
ing that God is the witness of all y
erviews. Conceal nothing from your spir
l guide, under any pretext, even if
uld feel doubtful or ashamed to o
3. Satan will often try to ur

Spiritual Guidance

your confidence in your spiritual guide as his best means of keeping you from error. What you shrink most from telling is usually that which it is most necessary to tell. Obey simply and heartily, without argument or discussing what you are recommended to do. Above all, fix your heart on God, and in all things, do not cling in an earthly way to your guide, and if you should be deprived of one to whom you owe much, be assured that God Who gave him should take care of you. If He were to deprive you of human aid, He would assuredly provide for you His Guide, and supply all your need.

God's Abiding Care for us

S PAUL says that "all things w
gether for good to them th
God;" and this is in truth the very
tion of the whole spiritual life. Ma
the Apostle says "all things," with
exception. Every event, whether it i
pleasure or pain; all that concerns
welfare, or repute; all the varying co
of our outer life, as those which af
inner life of the soul,—privation, c
weariness, temptation, failings,—ea
all "work together for good."]

... whatever our Heavenly
whether as concerns our natu
life, is our true good, however
be able to understand what I
foresee whither He is leading

But there is a condition w
be forgotten. All things wor
good only for "those that love
for such as have surrendered th
to God, and who seek His pleas
in all they do, ready to give
and are to Him, desiring to los
in God, that they may indeed
Him. "He that loveth his l
it, and he that hateth his life
in this world shall keep it unto
Whoever att


He knows how to mould you to His will, and lead you onwards to perfect sanctification; He knows exactly how each trial, each temptation, will test you, and He disposes all things according to His love is everlasting; "We love because He first loved us." Nothing of your want of perfect trust and confidence can prevent all things from forwarding your good, and leading you onwards to the fullness of your promised blessedness.

The consequences of this belief fully grasped, will influence your whole life. You will seek to give yourself up to God more and more unreservedly, asking nothing, receiving nothing, refusing nothing but

your strength is in God, in
abstaining from all self-see
reliance. Hope against hope
know in Whom I have trusted
consequence of this entire trust
you will be ready for any sacrifice
the sacrifice of your own
must be prepared to put aside
ness of your own reason and
accept mortifications and humili
are hard to bear, to bear the pur
heart and soul as by fire. All
nature, but true love of God will
bear it. If the Apostle's words
all things work together for you
you pick out this or that trial
tion and chastity.

The Soul's True Value

WHILE, on the one hand, humbles us, teaching, as that we are less than nothing, conscious, predisposed to evil, incapable of supernatural good, on the other hand before us a far higher estimate of our worth than any we could imagine of ourselves, when it makes known how God wrought our salvation, and the great things He has in store for us. The soul is created with a power of knowing and loving, with a gift of intelligence capable of knowing above all created beings to Him Who is uncreated; a gift of will to love God, with an incapacity to be satisfied with anything less than His Infinite Perfection. Try to realize your own ideas of happiness, you will find that ultimately it must rest in God.



... .. sat.
pienteousness," would be rather
a blessing. But there is a con-
to this eternal possession of C
won by a right use of free-w
short probation of this life,
helping us with His Grace to n
use of His gifts. It consists
seeking Him, in obeying Him
indeed "are not grievous," as
to earthly peace and happiness
Heavenly Rest. Considered th
glorious being! but take the c
and what a miserable, contempt
is, when he refuses to seek God
the empty cisterns of this world
of life" springing up to salva
... ..

not the beginning of our true life.

But the height of our dignity is the price set on man by God in sending His Word, Co-Equal and Co-Eternal with the Father, to take upon Him the form of man, to dwell with him, to teach him, to die for him. What our Dear Lord did for mankind generally, He did for each separate individual human being throughout all ages ; each soul that exists has cost His Life Blood, His Great Mysterious Sacrifice. It is past man's understanding, we can but take it on trust ; we cannot fathom the mighty truth, we only KNOW it. But it makes us realise that a Soul is a very precious thing, and that if Jesus thought it worth so infinite a price, we can scarcely estimate it too highly, or shrink from proving our belief in its value, by co-operating with Him for its salvation. Look at the Cross, if you would learn the true

The Soul

human being
what ; meas
r sufferings,
at standard ; se
owards your ov
and remember t
us, God is gre
knoweth all thin

OUR Lord has said, "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." Now intention is the eye of the soul, its motive power and guiding force; and if its eye be single, that is, if your intention be pure, with God for its undivided aim, free from self-interest, then your actions will be wholly and full of God's own Light. Singleness of intention implies purity and straightforwardness. Your intention is straightforward when you act in perfect good faith, not seeking to deceive yourself, but honestly following after truth. This sounds plain enough, but nevertheless it is not very common among men — prejudice, error, passion, vice, many less obvious infirmities interfere, and deceive the conscience; nothing save constant watchfulness against your great enemy, self-love, will be any security on this score. A pure intention must have no object but God, it must be free from the snares of self; and in singleness of intention is the very essence

really to read the mysteries of one another's hearts, whereas God sees every impulse and desire we can form. We all crave for attention, and often value small acts of consideration very highly, because they are signs of love—the wish to please is more acceptable to most of us than all else.

Such purity of intention can only be attained by giving yourself up wholly to God, asking Him to direct and guide, not only your outer life, but every thought and wish of your heart. Ask Him to kindle in you hopes and affections worthy of Himself; as

spiritual life, do not be in a hurry. Be content to go on quietly. When you discern somewhat in yourself which is earthly and imperfect, be patient while you strive to get it out. Your perceptions will grow,—God will show you very obvious stumbling blocks;—be diligent in clearing these and do not aim at heights to which you are not yet equal. Leave all to God, and trust that He will grant you earnestly desire that He would direct your intention, and seek to work with you to that end, be satisfied with the progress He sets before you; bridle your imagination, and remember that He works in ways unseen by us.

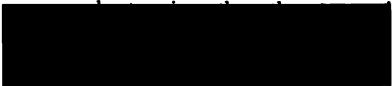
You may perhaps ask whether it is necessary always to direct the intellect aright? But when you have once given yourself wholly to God, such a formal a

Purity of Intention

restore Him that which is His, and your self-renunciation. It is well such an act of general intention evering ; it includes all other acts, and the most profitable to your inner life. Intention to accept God's Will in all implies all else, such as doing His pleasure, and avoiding what is displeasing Him, and it has the special advantage of helping to concentrate our thoughts away upon ourselves. As you advance in interior life, be sure that self will decrease in importance, and God will become more important, and this it is which the "single eye"

Mary and Martha

WE learn a weighty lesson co
the interior life from the l
these sisters; Martha being the ty
active life, seeking to set forth its
God by voluntary toil and effort; .
type of a contemplative life which
abide in absolute stillness, waiting t
an impulse from God only. Bot
were glad to welcome the Lord un
roof, both loved Him, both sought
their love, but in very differer
Martha's aim was to supply her
temporal wants, and she was eager
anxious in her labour, while Mary
outer token of her love, content
Jesus' Feet and drink in His li
words; the one all exterior life and
the other all interior silence and re



...ness it was fitting that
provide for their Master's wa
was eager, busy, troubled ;
thought more highly of her c
of her sister's. Therefore the
her, showing her that howeve
works may be, essential of coun
measure, still they are but fo
whereas the hidden life whic
earth, continues to rise perpetu
until it finds its perfection in
was the same when on the occas
rus' death Jesus went to the sist
went eagerly to meet Him ; I
till the Master was come and ca
the one acted on her own impuls
received all impulses from Cl
from all this we may gather, that
however valuable. are
than pray

doing all with recollection and in union with God. This is by no means easy, and therefore many spiritual guides advise beginners to study prayer and meditation rather than active good works, until the habit of recollection is so formed that they can give themselves freely to external things without losing inward rest. At all times that restlessness, even in the inner life, which comes from self-love is an evil to be steadily pressed. Mary sat still at Jesus' Feet; she did not talk, or question Him, she gathered up each precious word as it fell; and so the devout soul must not squander warmth and freshness in many words and feelings, but rather wait silently for God's Grace to work within. Restless activity multiplies devotions and practices, it is good to change. it is never satisfied - but a trans-

ness puts forward, but every duty will be sanctified by your inseparable union with God, and your continual dependence upon His Grace. You will readily do whatever you can for your neighbour, according to what God points out the way,—not officiously or with self-seeking zeal; even in the holiest duty you will prefer to go where God calls you, rather than where your own fancy or choice may lead. You will accept whatever may be your actual condition, because it is that which is pointed out by Him. How happy and peaceful, how useful to man, how acceptable to God we should be, if we could always set aside our love of self-guidance, and serve Him thus!

“Alway with God”

*“So foolish was I, and ignorant, even as
beast before Thee; nevertheless I am
Thee.”—PSA. lxxiii. 21.*

THE two clauses are remarkable
“as a beast before God,”
“alway by Him.” Our idea of a h
and close intercourse with God was sor
other than this! and yet it is His Hol
Which speaks. What is it to be as
of burden? Is it not to give all one's s
and power, without any choice or lin
master's service; to bear what he
one, go whither he - ”

Intellectual faculties as well as
content to endure dryness in part
Holy Communion, and to be deprived
sensible sweetness in religious exercises
your intercourse with your neighbor
must not be studied or affected,
upon the faults of others; you must
your own mind honestly, care
whether you are admired or despised
refrain from thinking about it
When alone, you must strive
spirit, not allowing yourself to wander
will of your imagination among
or future; you must repress curiosity
meddle with other people's affairs
deal with what concerns your conscience
Your heart must

jection that leads to being "away with
and sometimes He is in truth nearest
the soul fancies Him afar off. Eve
Dear Lord cried out from the Cross,
God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" a
in truth the Father had not forsaken
though He permitted the fiercest tem
His Wrath to pass over the Son of
For a little while He may hide His
but soon the veil will be withdrawn fo
—and the days of mourning shall be
for the faithful souls which have "wait
the Loving-kindness of the Lord."

¹ Luke viii. 13.

Death

THE thought of death is fearful to those who are living in sin; they cannot accept of its reality, but at least they strive to banish the thought. It is fearful too, to such as serve God from self-interest only, whose hearts are fixed on their own unworthy selves, and who dwell more on God's Justice than on His Mercy. Generally speaking, the thought of death must be painful to those who are not fully detached from the things of this world. It is only those who are prepared to die to self and


in need for ever from all temptation
from all possibility of displeasing
He has hitherto been their life, and
He is to become unchanging, ever-
more is no question in such minds
future. God is God—they love
their sins are manifold, but they
forget them all, and cast themselves
on His Infinite Mercy. They dwell
on the thought that Jesus Christ is their
life, and say within themselves, "How
lovely is He Who has dealt so lovingly
with me Who has guided me hitherto, Who
has brought me to Himself with such bound-
less Whose Love will not leave me
my feeble breath struggles within
me, how can such an one cling to life?
How can such an one fear death, which is
nothing to Him Who is Life



orthy Judge Eternal, suffer us not at
hour, for any pains of death, to fall
hee." "Thanks be to God, Which
is the Victory through our Lord Jesus

re that you will look at death, accord-
your manner of life. If a pure heart
ortified spirit have broken down the
barrier between you and God ; if trial
rifice have brought you into a close
on of the Cross, to union with God,
not fear death ; you will see it from
e only, and in no way from your own,
is fearful is lost when merged in His
Vill. Death is wholly loveable and
l seen in the Light of His Love.
ct love casteth out fear ;" "O death,
is thy sting? O grave, where is thy
?"

e are weighty truths, only to be rea-
we draw nearer God ; but those who
as yet fully grasp them, may believe
y are truths by the light of faith, and



surely God would not have a soul which clings to Him scared at the thought of the last narrow passage to be crossed in reaching Him. But no set words or thoughts will enable us to meet death trustfully. Such trust is God's Gift, and the more we can detach ourselves from all save Himself, the more "freely He will give us" this, as all other blessings. Once attain to losing self in God, and death will indeed have no sting. We are wont to exhort one class of Christians to meditate upon death, its uncertainty, its terrors, in order that they may see how they live. But those who have attained to the interior life, need not dwell on this side of the question, God calls them rather to a perpetual mystical death, death to self in will, in thought, in deed, so that

Eternity

WE tremble at the thought of eternity and well we may; but if the future was turned to good account, we should soon learn to rejoice in trembling. To those who yield unrestrainedly to their passions, the thought of eternity must needs be terrible. Yet they too might well pause and think whether they do well to sacrifice an eternal future to the moment of time now passing. Those too who cling tightly to the joys and hopes of this life may tremble to feel that what they cherish most is gliding from beneath their grasp, and eternity alone remaining. But then arises the question, If all this is so soon to pass away, why should I cleave so closely to it? Why not seek that which endureth for ever rather than that which is but as foam upon the sea, as lightning in the midnight sky? Again, some timid souls

measuring God by,
rather than themselves by their
greatness. They have not looked chiefly
His Glory, His Will, His Love, but at them-
selves. Let them look higher, and fear
yield to love ; peace will come to their souls
and Eternity will cease to dismay them.

It must do more ;—it must become a source
of abiding rest and joy. Hear S. Paul tell
us that “our light affliction, which is but
a moment, worketh for us a far more
exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”¹
Let not this thought carry you over many
of this troublesome life, through many
aches, and wearinesses, and sorrow
Saint of old was wont to ask of any
that came to him, “How does it

it
l-
ill
as,
rce
ng
or
x-
ill
s
t-
A
t
t
t





